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Thesis/Project

A TRINITARIAN-RELATIONAL MODEL
FOR CLERGY OF THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH,
PROVINCE OF THE UNITED STATES

BY

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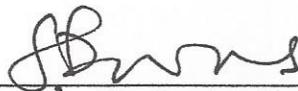
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by Rosemary Ananis

ABSTRACT

The Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States (TOCCUSA) is a fledgling church in the Catholic tradition establishing its identity in the United States. As a nascent organization, it presently lacks the structure for educating its clergy. Currently, most of the clergy and membership were formed in the Roman Catholic Church and because TOCCUSA envisions a more inclusive, welcoming and contemporary Catholic Church, a new model of ministry better reflecting its ethos is desired.

Looking at the history that preceded the establishment of the Old Catholic Churches in Europe in the late nineteenth century, the author demonstrates the historical eroding of local church authority and conciliar governance. These events led to the formation of the Old Catholic Church and the Union of Utrecht in Europe which serve as prototypes for TOCCUSA.

Drawing on over four decades of clinical social work experience where relationships are a critical factor in helping people grow and heal, the author uses concepts from Trinitarian theology, relational theology and Relational-Cultural Theory, along with the foundational pillars of the Union of Utrecht, to create a relational model of ministry. Ministry according to this model is consistent with a focus on local authority, conciliar government, diversity and ecumenism and strives to practice the ancient faith and serve the modern world while being open, inclusive, and welcoming.

To my teachers

Jane Christie, social worker, and Paul Coughlin, priest
Two people who believed in me before I believed in myself.

Thank you for your healing and your love.

We must finally go back to the ultimate Christian source for our principle—the central doctrine of the Trinity itself....God is a mystery of *relationship*, and this relationship is foundationally and essentially love. The Three Persons of the Trinity are not uniform—but quite distinct—and yet completely *oned* in total outpouring and perfect receiving.

—Richard Rohr, adapted from “The Perennial Tradition.”

The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old,
but on building the new.

—Socrates

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Preface

Before I even began classes for my Doctor of Ministry program, I was sitting in a Boston restaurant, having dinner with a senior leader of my church. I was excited to share with him the idea I was considering for a doctoral project. When I told him I wanted to focus on developing a relational model of clergy practice he said, “Don’t use the word ‘relational.’ The guys won’t read it.” I was stunned into silence by the manner and authority with which he spoke. My ideas were just developing and as yet unsubstantiated by research. Upon reflection later that evening, I was irritated—annoyed that he so easily dismissed my idea and perplexed that he so easily assumed what other men might be willing to read. I was also surprised by his response because I know him to be open to others’ ideas, non-judgmental, and a champion for women’s rights and equality. He and I were in agreement that the clergy model for Catholics in this country was not one we wanted to emulate in our new church. At that time and place, though, we did not share the same vision.

With forty years of clinical social work experience, I believe in the power of relationships. I have seen firsthand that people can be healed and transformed within the context of healthy relationships. Moreover, as a first-generation leader in the Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States (TOCCUSA) and mandated by our National Assembly to develop a model of ministry that spoke with the voice of TOCCUSA, I had a blank slate in front of me.

Since beginning this work, I have received tremendous encouragement. Recently, it was reported in John Allen's blog for *The National Catholic Reporter*, a liberal Roman Catholic publication, that Maria Voce, president of the international Focolare Movement¹ and referred to as "the most eminent woman in the Catholic world," said, "the church needs not only to appreciate what have been traditionally defined as 'female gifts,' such as the capacity to form loving relationships, but also that it must 'seek out, and listen to, the thinking of women.'"²

Another event that occurred during the writing of this paper is the election of Pope Francis. It must be noted that he is addressing, in the Roman Catholic Church, many of the issues I have raised in this thesis. During this first year of his papacy, he has been a beautiful example of a servant leader and has addressed difficult issues such as homosexuality and divorce with a more accepting response. He has challenged the church hierarchy to examine their complicity in world-wide poverty and is demonstrating his own integrity by living more humbly than any pope in recent history. History will determine if he is able to bring about structural change within that church. With hope in my heart for the Roman Catholic Church, I continue on my journey.

¹ The Focolare Movement began in 1943 during the Second World War as a spiritual and social renewal. It was founded by Chiara Lubich (1920-2008), a charismatic and significant woman of the twentieth century. Its purpose: to work cooperatively to build a more united world, following the inspiration of Jesus' prayer to the Father "May they all be one" (John 17:21), respecting and valuing diversity. It focuses on dialogue as a method, has a constant commitment to building bridges and relationships of fraternity among individuals, peoples, and cultural worlds.

² John Allen, Jr., "Dolan's Farewell; Women; Russia; Stuff You Can't Make Up; and Pope Watch" *National Catholic Reporter*, November 15, 2013, accessed November 15, 2013, <http://ncregionline.org/blogs/all-things-catholic/dolans-farewell-women-russia-stuff-you-cant-make-and-pope-watch>.

Bolstered by my memories of the revolutionary 1960s and 1970s, and further encouraged by the contemporary voices of women theologians, I came to Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) to see where my ideas would take me. The coursework and research have enriched me beyond description. The faculty and students at EDS have lifted my heart and my soul. My faculty advisors the Rev. Dr. William M. Kondrath and Dr. Kwok Pui-lan gave me invaluable feedback and assistance and kept me focused on my goal. And as tedious as the work has been, my cohort, the Water Buffalos, has made much of it fun. I am thankful for how the EDS community has embraced me, sometimes stretching to accommodate the Old Catholic perspective.

My family and friends have understood when I have had to turn down invitations to events because I had to write. I look forward to rejoining them with a promise of “NO MORE SCHOOL.” I have tremendous gratitude, appreciation, and respect for my niece, Kate Bositis, who just happens to be a terrific certified professional copyeditor. In the middle of her own busy acting career, she took on this project and polished my writing to its current state.

My most humble gratitude, however, goes to my wife Janet. Her willingness to read this over and over again, and her feedback, support, encouragement, patience, and love have made it all possible.

Chapter 1

Introduction

An Old Problem

Churches are in crisis. The well-known Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff says the institution of church and its methods of perpetuating itself have become “unbalanced.”¹

Clergy and laity may have different ideas and goals for their faith communities. Perspectives diverge on issues such as divorce, procreation, gender roles, and human sexuality. Some of the faithful feel at risk of alienation because their stand on these issues are opposed by the institution.

I contend that the crisis is two-fold: On the one hand, there is a crisis of leadership. Clergy have not been prepared to relate to the increasingly educated, multicultural, and complex world in which we are now living. On the other hand, there is a crisis of connection. Some of the traditional methods of preparing clergy to relate to and care for God’s people have become outdated and even ineffective for a population that is increasingly isolated by individualism, competition, and the Internet. Doug Kreighbaum believes that the problems are not theological, but relational.² I agree. Unless the clergy are as capable of navigating the complexities of human relationships as they are of navigating the rubrics of the Easter vigil or preaching a rousing and inspirational homily, the church will lose all relevance. Unless the clergy know how to follow the lead of

¹ Leonardo Boff, *Church, Charism and Power* (New York: Crossroads, 1985), 112.

² Doug Kreighbaum, *Relational Theology: Recapturing Powerful Relationships in the Church* (Apopka, FL: Reliance Media, Inc.), 2009.

Jesus, the broken-spirited will have no place to turn. Unless the church can provide a safe home for the wandering spiritual pilgrim, they will look elsewhere. Furthermore, I believe that the history of the church as a patriarchal, hierarchical institution is buried so deeply in our consciousness that we sometimes unwittingly perpetuate behaviors and attitudes without ever examining or renegotiating them. This kind of negligence will no longer be tolerated by those seeking a more meaningful and relational experience of church.

We must come to grips with the fact that this world is not the same world in which we grew up. As we look to the future, we must consider the words of Kwok Pui-lan, who said that in 2040, “there will be no racial and ethnic majority in the U.S.,” and citing the work of Diana L. Eck she says, “the U.S. has changed from a ‘Christian country’ to become the most religiously diverse nation of the world.”¹ Malan Nel, a South African theologian, states, “The task of theological training is seen as the development of pathfinders who will envision the purpose of the congregation in the local context but with sensitivity for the global context.”² Does “theological training” include the development of relationship skills and ministerial formation? Will future clergy be equipped to address this globalized community? Will they have a message for those who might look different from them or want to worship in ways that are unfamiliar to the local community? I believe these searching spiritual pilgrims want to belong to a loving, welcoming, and inclusive church embraced by the God who embraces all. Will

¹ Kwok Pui-lan, “From Pasts to Possibilities: Religious Leadership in 2040” (Keynote Address at the 32nd Biennial Consultation, Association for Theological Field Education, Williamsburg, Virginia, January 24, 2013), http://atfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/11/From-Pasts-to-Possibilities.mss_3.pdf.

² Malan Nel, “Public Pastoral Leaders: The Purpose of Theological Training,” *In die Skriflig* 39, no. 3 (2005): 449.

clergy be prepared to minister to all in God's kingdom? This thesis attempts to address these questions and more. Because of the scope of this paper as well as the anticipated audience, I have limited the following brief development of clergy formation to the Roman Catholic tradition.

When we look back at early gatherings of the followers of Christ, it is clear that there was little uniformity. One only has to read the Acts of the Apostles to realize that conflict was evident. What is also evident is the involvement of the entire community in carrying out the ministry of Jesus. Religious leadership had not been defined beyond the laying on of hands by the Apostles. As the followers of Christ grew in number and geographical diversity, community leaders began receiving "divine training"³ and were ordained, by the laying on of hands, to oversee their communities. With growth came the inevitable need for organization and within the first century distinctions were being made for deacons, presbyters and bishops and the roles and rules for clergy began to develop.⁴ Joseph Kitagawa informs us that "with the development of the clerical hierarchy and of eucharistic theology, the office of the presbyter, which in early Christianity had no priestly connotations, came to be interpreted in sacerdotal terms based on the principle of participation in Christ's priesthood."⁵

Bishops gained importance when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire and the church became aligned with secular rulers. This

³ 1Timothy 1:4

⁴ See 1Timothy, 2Timothy, and Titus.

⁵ Joseph Kitagawa, "Priesthood in the History of Religions," in *To Be A Priest: Perspectives on Vocation and Ordination*, ed. Robert E. Terwilliger and Urban T. Holmes, III (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 51. Kitagawa also states that this interpretation was later rejected by the Protestant reformers who favored the priesthood of all believers.

allowed the hierarchy of the church to wield considerable power, a trend that prevailed over the centuries. As recently as 1906, Pope Pius X (1835-1914) issued an encyclical that stated,

The church essentially is an unequal society, that is, it is a society formed by two categories of persons, the Pastor and flock....So distinct are these categories that with the pastoral body only rests the necessary right and authority for promoting the end of the society and directing all its members towards that end; the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led, and, like a docile flock, to follow the Pastors.⁶

As the clergy became more exclusive, the laity became less vital to the church. Because of proclamations like Pius X's, the growth and development of the laity as the body of Christ became stunted. The need for healthy relationships between clergy and laity became almost a moot point as the laity became more submissive. Anne Rowthorn states in her book, *The Liberation of the Laity*, "The laity of the Church are now but a pale shadow of what they once were."⁷ The clergy held all the authority in church; they believed that they were responsible for all church leadership, and they were trained to provide just that. This does not have to remain so, and if we are to be truly faithful to God's call to each one of us, this *must not* remain so.

Vatican II (1962-1965) was a pivotal event, opening the windows of the church and the eyes of the laity, many of whom began experiencing a more embracing church.

⁶ *Vehementer Nos*, Encyclical of Pope Pius X, promulgated on February 11, 1906.

⁷ Anne Rowthorn, *The Liberation of the Laity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1986), 7.

Dogmatic changes were promulgated that called for *all* people of God to be one⁸ and called the bishops of the church to collegial unity.⁹ While *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution of the Church, advocated for the priesthood of the faithful, it maintained the “distinction which the Lord made between sacred ministers and the rest of the People of God” however called them to work in union, giving the sacred ministers the role of “teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the authority of Christ.”¹⁰ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* called for liturgical reforms that invited the faithful to active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy, yet still excluded women from some liturgical roles. The pastoral encyclical, *Gaudium et Spes*, looked at the signs of the times¹¹ and challenged the church to raise up the dignity of the human person (Chapter II) and addressed the community of mankind (Chapter III) while responding to the Gospel spirit.¹² While these reforms were welcomed by most, the Roman Catholic Church remained exclusive to many.

In addition to the dogmatic, liturgical, and pastoral reforms of Vatican II, events like the civil rights movement and the women’s movement, medical advances like birth control, and a more educated laity precipitated a call to action. This evolution led to a growing push by the Catholic laity to reclaim their baptismal promise of being named priest, prophet, and king. Many began to exercise the right to their own baptismal ministry and yet, many people in many places have run into walls.

⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, 13.

⁹ Ibid., 22. While this encyclical hinted at greater conciliarism, it still reinforced the higher authority of the pope.

¹⁰ Ibid., 32.

¹¹ For example, evidence of the widening gap between the rich and the poor and ongoing ideological disputes (*Gaudium et Spes*, 4), advances in science (5), and changing social structures (7).

¹² *Gaudium et Spes*, 43.

The struggle of the laity stirs my passion because I came out of that church, the church in which I longed to play a larger role, to use my gifts to serve God, and also to teach and lead the people into active involvement in God's mission in the world. In order to live out my vocation, I had to leave the Roman Catholic Church in which I was raised, understanding that it would not allow me to answer my call.

My concern with having a healthy church is rooted in both my previous experiences in a restrictive church and my practice of clinical social work. It was through the latter that a clinical understanding of the importance of relationship and its ability to help heal brokenness grew. It was my introduction to relational theology as a distinct perspective that helped me begin to unite the clinical social work I have been doing for the past forty-plus years with my second, much more recent, vocation as spiritual leader. Bringing both perspectives together helped me realize why so many of my clients got better faster. My social work skill had been augmented with my willingness to be more transparent to the client in order to establish with them, not just a professional relationship, but a truly mutual, caring relationship. I understood that I had been transformed by God's hand *within* relationships and was unwittingly practicing social work hand-in-hand with relational theology—a contemporary theological perspective that emphasizes the mutual inter-relatedness of the Godhead. It was apparent to me that many of the wounded I saw needed not just good psychological guidance but also, more importantly, connection with a loving God and a healthy and loving community to help them heal. This perception is most likely attributed to a strong spirituality passed on by

my mother, along with the saving relationships formed during my difficult adolescence following her death.

I am convinced that my salvation is connected, in no small way, to the loving, generous, and respectful social worker who allowed me the time, space, and safe environment I needed to begin to heal. It was her “kindness, forbearance, and patience”¹³ that led to the beginning of one of the most important transformations of my life. It is my belief that no one does what one does by accident, so, following her footsteps, I entered the social work profession where I could try to make a similar mark. To my own surprise, I frequently found myself offering clients the opportunity to talk about how God was working in their lives. Without reference to religion (I stopped going to church when I finished college), I was doing what other social workers were hesitant to do at that time - acknowledge the importance of God and invite clients into healthy, loving relationships.¹⁴

Imagine my surprise when, after a more than twenty-year hiatus from organized religion, I was pulled into a deeper relationship with God through a Roman Catholic church community. It was not long, however, before I realized that the structure of the community that reawakened my connection with God was no longer a fit for me. Despite the renewal that followed Vatican II, there were still rules that were exclusionary and practices that seemed inconsistent with what I had learned about humanity. Those rules and those practices made it impossible to stay.

¹³ Romans 2:4.

¹⁴ It is imperative to note that these relationships were never sexual in any way and were confined within the ethical and professional boundaries of social work.

A Move Toward Change

The Holy Spirit, in her wisdom, then led me to a church that not only emphasizes the freedom and relationship of the Trinity, but actually *practices* it, a church that strives for holy relationship on all levels. A new church, the Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States (TOCCUSA), was established on September 24, 2010, when five bishops from four independent Catholic jurisdictions came together with their clergy and lay members at a retreat center in Marin St. Croix, Minnesota. The formation of TOCCUSA was the culmination of three years of monthly phone conferences between the bishops and many hours of education and discussion with clergy and laity about the Old Catholic Church as it exists throughout Europe in the Union of Utrecht (UU).¹⁵ The UU is a communion of Catholic churches that formed in response to Vatican I and its proclamations of papal infallibility and universal jurisdiction. Their theology is Trinitarian, and their ecclesiology holds the synod as the highest governing body. Because of the commitment to the authority of the local church and the belief that diversity does not destroy unity, liturgical practices are free to embody the customs and traditions of each local community.

In preparation for the inauguration of TOCCUSA at our first National Assembly in 2010, dialogue focused on how this Ultrajectine¹⁶ model of church might work within and among our autonomous dioceses in the United States given that the governance and ecclesiology differ from what most people in the United States know as Catholic. The

¹⁵ For the Declaration of Utrecht see Appendix 3.

¹⁶ Used to define the tradition of the Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands, headquartered at the city of Utrecht.

people of God who made up the five separate churches involved were, with very few exceptions, cradle Roman Catholics who no longer felt able to worship within that church. They were looking for a new model. As the bishops themselves were learning about the Old Catholic Church, significant effort was made to share this new understanding with the faithful and much time was spent listening to their questions and concerns. Not until all five churches met in their individual synods and received the unanimous approval and encouragement of the laity did the bishops move to establish TOCCUSA.

A New Problem

At our first National Assembly there were questions, about how TOCCUSA would be moving forward with ongoing education of our membership and clergy. Our struggle at that point in our brief history was recognizing that none of our existing clergy or laity were formed in the Old Catholic Church. As mentioned, most of the clergy and laity in TOCCUSA were raised in a patriarchal, hierarchical, and oppressive church where women and divorced individuals as well as those with any form of sexual or gender difference were routinely silenced and consistently marginalized. What training, then, did we want for TOCCUSA clergy so that those values and habits that had been so destructive to so many in the past would be replaced with values and habits that reflect the ethos of the Old Catholic Church? How could we engage them in and teach them a new model of ministry—one that would encourage them to leave restrictive and unhealthy notions of church behind and invite them into the freedom of a relational experience of God and community? And what of the *new* members who would be coming

into the church and the *new* clergy who would be ordained or incardinated from other churches?

A Proposed Solution

Interestingly, new models of church are always evolving and they demonstrate that there are many ways for one to live out the experience of church. While TOCCUSA is clear in our ecclesial model, which strives to encourage and empower all people to live out the ministry to which they were called in baptism, we do not yet have an educational element in place to perpetuate our beliefs and models of ministry for both clergy and laity. The best way to perpetuate ourselves is to make sure we have a healthy church. The way to ensure a healthy church is to make certain that our theology, ecclesiology, and ministerial practices are accessible and relevant.

At the second National Assembly in 2011, the consensus was that both clergy and laity would benefit from programs that would engage them more deeply in Old Catholic theology, ecclesiology, and liturgical practices. It was at the second National Assembly that I was encouraged by the entire gathering to pursue the development of an educational program for current and future TOCCUSA clergy. At that same meeting, the Rev. Diane Datz of San Antonio, Texas, was charged with developing a similar program for the laity of TOCCUSA.

As part of my directive from the delegates at National Assembly, I helped establish the Institute for Old Catholic Studies (IOCS) in 2012 and currently serve as the dean. The IOCS is a vehicle for current clergy to study Old Catholicism in more depth. A two-semester course on Old Catholic history has been developed and taught by the Rev.

Dr. Günter Esser of the Old Catholic Studies Department at the University of Bonn, Germany. Future courses on ecumenism, Old Catholic ecclesiology, and Old Catholic sacramental theology are being planned and will be offered to complete the requirements for a certificate in Old Catholic studies. This certificate is required of all TOCCUSA clergy.

There are many ways for TOCCUSA clergy candidates to get a good theological education. Since our inception, we have made (and continue to make) connections with seminaries that provide both residential and distance-learning programs. Through these programs, students learn theology, scripture, preaching, ethics, and some pastoral skills. What is not yet available in the United States is the means for them to learn the polity, character, and relational perspective of TOCCUSA.

This thesis is aimed at developing a ministerial model for current and future clergy of TOCCUSA so they can experience and practice relational, dialogical leadership. It is intended to help them be informed of and responsive to the relational, cultural, and contextual nature of community. It proposes to teach and train clergy in a model of pastoral and ministerial relationships. In so doing, it may transform the role of clergy to empower and equip the people of God to claim their baptismal ministry along *with* clergy so that the *entire* community becomes a part of the *Missio Dei*. In a new church that has not yet developed its educational and training program for those seeking ordination to ministry, these goals are lofty and worth pursuing.

I believe that our Triune God *is* relational. Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, we must recognize and acknowledge our divine calling to be in

relationship. We are relational beings. While the field of sociology has always acknowledged our connectedness, the field of psychology has begun to catch up only within the past fifty years or so. Psychology is now recognizing the rudimentary connectedness of human beings. In fact, all of science, from the study of cells to the study of the cosmos, acknowledges that connection is fundamental to our being. Those who are ordained to serve God have, perhaps more than others, an obligation to understand the sanctity of these connections in the relationships into which they enter. Each one of these relationships will be holy and diverse and each one of them will require the openness and honesty that only a healthy relationship will support. Therefore, clergy need relationship skills as well as a strong theological education.

Because our psycho-socio-politico-cultural identities are so subjective, so innocently inherited from those who are supposed to love us more than anyone in the world, we do not often critically examine them until we are forced or challenged to do so. As a clinical social worker, I often share with my clients what I refer to as “the Overcoat Story.” As the story goes, when we are infants and our caretakers want to bring us outside, they wrap us in some sort of clothing that does three things: it fits, so that we are comfortable; it is attractive, so that we feel good about ourselves; and it protects us from the weather outside. As we grow, these “overcoats” are changed to fit our increasing size, the changing styles, and the weather. Of utmost importance is protection from the harshness of the elements. I explain that while we are young and have no real say in our wardrobe choices, all sorts of overcoats are put on us. Some of these overcoats are actual overcoats, made of cloth and thread; many more are metaphorical overcoats—words,

attitudes, prejudices, and ways of thinking and being in the world. We almost always wear those metaphorical overcoats with fierce loyalty and irrational sentimentality because they were put on us by, as noted, those people who love us more than anyone else in the world. Many of those individuals who do not change their overcoats in response to their ever-changing world and environments eventually find themselves walking into my office feeling uncomfortable, bad about themselves, and, most of all, unprotected in this climate we call adulthood. So I tell them that therapy is a little bit like a shopping trip. First, we look in the closet to weed out the overcoats that no longer work: some are the wrong color, style, or size; some were hand-me-downs in the first place and are too worn to be of any use. Then, after we have discarded the old overcoats, we shop for new ones; that is, we pursue new ways of being that not only suit us better but also allow us to function at a healthier, more productive level. Richard Rohr calls these original overcoats the “False Self”—trappings of ego that we all learned to help us get through an ordinary day. He goes on to say, “To *not* let go of our False Self at the right time and in the right way is precisely what it means to be stuck, trapped, and addicted to yourself.”¹⁷

I hope this thesis will equip our clergy with new overcoats that are comfortable, make them feel good about themselves, and protect them from some of the pitfalls of ministry in today’s harsh world. I also hope it will help them wrestle with and better define their own spirituality and vocational call in the service of TOCCUSA. Most importantly, it is my desire that this will give our clergy and clergy candidates the

¹⁷ Richard Rohr, *Immortal Diamond: The Search for our True Self* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2013), 28. Rohr credits Thomas Merton for first suggesting the use of the term “False Self.”

information necessary to help them connect with and relate to those they serve in a way that truly emulates our Triune God. Healthy relationships, when imitating the perichoretic dance of God, are transformative. We must shape our own relationships accordingly. For those of us in ministry, it is imperative we do so.

Before one can say what *can be*, though, one must know what *is*. So, in the next chapter, I will provide some history and background of the Old Catholic Church, Union of Utrecht and then describe how TOCCUSA developed. Since TOCCUSA was only incorporated in 2010, we have little history of our own. It is important, however, to understand our foundations and the principles on which we were established and on which this model rests.

In chapter three, I will introduce the theoretical foundation for this proposed model of ministry: Trinitarian theology, relational theology, and relational-cultural theory (RCT). Trinitarian theology may be one of the oldest systematic theologies that exist; by its very nature, it is relational. While the scope of this project does not allow a comprehensive history of the topic, it is important to know that it is one with which the church has been occupied since the early centuries. On foundations built by Athanasius, the Cappadocians, and Augustine, the church has worked tirelessly to try and describe the ineffable Triune God. This chapter focuses on the work of contemporary theologians. Catherine Mowry LaCuna, John Zizioulas, and Miroslav Volf are excellent representatives of the current Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant perspectives on Trinitarian thought. Sharing their ideas on the Triune God, they all arrive at a similar

conclusion: for the church to properly represent God and God's mission, it must engage in relationships that are healing and transformative.

Relational theology was pioneered by people such as Harry Emerson Fosdick, Samuel Shoemaker, Norman Vincent Peale, and Eugenia Price. However, I will utilize a more current selection of theologians and authors, such as Paul R. Sponheim and Doug Kreighbaum, to explore a variety of views that emphasize interpersonal relationships as essential to one's theological viewpoint. Similar to the conclusions of the Trinitarian theologians, the works of these individuals demonstrate the importance of relational theology, arguing that clergy who model the Trinitarian relationship come to know the transformative power of relationship and are truly engaged in a healing ministry.

The third element of the theoretical foundation for this model is relational-cultural theory (RCT). The developmental theories of Jean Baker Miller, Judith V. Jordan, Carol Gilligan, Judith Herman, and many others like them brought about enormous changes in the political and psychological aspects of relationship. As a result, issues of gender and power can now be addressed and more equality in relationships sought. Work from the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute at the Wellesley Centers for Women will be presented in order to point out aspects and demands of healthy relationships. These developmental and relational concepts—which Jean Baker Miller called “relational-cultural theories”—and upon which Judith Jordan built, highlight the importance of socio-cultural context and the necessity of sensitivity in the areas of relationship and pastoral ministry. Despite the fact that the work of these women took place more than

forty years ago, their ideas remain relevant to and necessary for building a more just and caring clergy paradigm.

As mentioned above, a tradition of patriarchy and centralized power and authority has dominated the church experience for so many years that great effort must be made to nurture an attitude of gender equality and mutual respect in the people who serve as clergy. While feminist theory and feminist theology will not be explicitly addressed in this project, many of the practical and theoretical perspectives included here owe a great debt to the women and men who have taken those worn structures of the past and, with imagination and integrity, helped redesign the shape and manner of our culture and our church.

The conclusion of chapter three will demonstrate how many of these theoretical models are, in some ways, already woven into the ideal ethos of TOCCUSA as the church attempts to demonstrate a more communal and local model. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of strengthening these models and ensuring that they will be passed on to future generations.

Chapter four will present a model to enhance one's ability to engage in relational ministry and to underscore TOCCUSA's focus on healing relationships as a source of transformation. When practicing this model, Old Catholic clergy will be asked to engage in a collaborative and relational ministry that exemplifies power *with* laity. They will be asked to emphasize the necessity of education for laypeople in order to equip the laity for their own ministry. Clergy will be called upon to guide the laity who live out their ministries as those laity are called to do by their baptismal covenant. Together the clergy

and laity will learn to discern and decipher the context in which they live and move and have their being. Together they can ask, “What is God doing in our world, in our community?” And together they can develop ways to enter into God’s missional movement.

Clergy will be asked to demonstrate advanced relational ministerial practice and to explore mutual ministry and other models of emerging churches. They will be asked to explore and utilize the work of people like Doug Gay, who envisions a reshaped and remixed church. They will be asked to step outside of their comfort zones to embrace an ever-changing, ever-expanding world. They will be asked to move to unfamiliar places—physically and psychologically—to hold up and minister to God’s people. Some clergy and clergy aspirants will have already mastered many of these relational skills; others will struggle to grasp them on intellectual, theological, and practical levels; for most, this model of ministry will be a radical departure from the enacted Roman Catholic ministry with which they have been familiar.

The final chapter will explore what such a model might mean for TOCCUSA. Perhaps the church will take on a different shape or perhaps it will find itself ministering in different ways. After all, it is quite likely that we, as a new church, will have many more transitions and adjustments to make. May the Holy Spirit guide us in all of those changes.

Finally, there will be several appendices with educational materials and resources to enhance one’s relational ministry. Strengthened by this Trinitarian-relational model I

pray that TOCCUSA clergy will be prepared for the next generation who come seeking a meaningful Catholic context in which to worship and follow God.

Chapter 2

History of the Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States: Planting Seeds of Relationship

All of Christianity has its roots in the same church—the ancient church as established by the followers of Christ. The faith and enthusiasm generated by those first followers of Jesus have fueled Christianity for more than two millennia. We must never abandon the effort to rekindle the aim and passion of those first communities that followed in Jesus' footsteps with such love and commitment. However, as stated in the previous chapter, the church has become unbalanced. Before we can talk about ways to change that imbalance, it is essential to take a brief look at how we got to where we are.

The Rise of Rome

The focus of the early Christian communities was on the message and the way of Jesus. A sense of structure was just beginning to emerge and involved considerable struggle. As local gatherings spread across regions and provinces, they developed networks that shared the Eucharist, their most important expression of communion. These networks of local churches had considerable diversity, but their unity was defined by their faith and the sharing of Eucharist. Ultimately, the growth of the early church demanded structure and order to ensure its ongoing life and mission. The role of the bishop, the spiritual leader of the local church, was central to the functioning of the early

Christian church. His role became an essential component of the definition of “catholic”¹⁸ in that the bishop represented the local church at the gatherings of the universal church or church councils.

When Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, a close relationship between church and state was established and the church began to develop in a more hierarchical, military-like fashion modeled after the Roman Empire. Secular rulers were often appointed to the role of bishop and were obliged to the pope, who held a position of spiritual power in the Roman Empire. Over the centuries, it had become customary to regulate the consideration and rank of the bishops according to the importance of the city in which they resided. That put the bishop of Rome in a very special position since Rome was the capital of the Roman Empire. Once the Empire fell, churches became structured according to national boundaries. Each national church was financially supported by its secular authority, and the local bishop tended to the spiritual matters of that country’s people.

Because the fall of the Roman Empire threatened the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) was called to formalize the status of Rome’s bishop by declaring the superior authority of the Roman See. The power and ecclesial influence of the bishop of Rome was established and held firm for centuries.¹⁹

¹⁸St. Ignatius, “Epistle to the Smyrnaeans,” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight, accessed April 24, 2013, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0109.htm>.

¹⁹The power of Rome was encouraged by such documents as the *Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals*. Despite the universal agreement that they were forgeries, this series of letters from Roman bishops was accepted by Pope Nicholas I and used as source material for those who were beginning to codify Western Canon law. These letters provided a basis for the supreme teaching authority of the pope and claimed that the

In 1302, Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303) issued the bull *Unum Sanctum*. The bull decreed that “it is necessary to the eternal salvation of every human being that he should be subject to the Roman Pontiff,”²⁰ thereby instituting *plenitude potestatis* (complete power). C. B. Moss, one of the few Old Catholic historians who have been published in English, writes,

From this time the secularizing and corruption of the Papacy proceeded apace. Because the whole administration of the Church was now centered in the papal court, where the vested interests of the officials prevented any reforms, men began to wonder whether there was any way of escaping from a sovereignty whose Divine right no one in Latin Christendom disputed, but whose practical consequences were so disastrous.²¹

During this period, schisms and conflict surrounded the issue of authority in the church. In an attempt to resolve these conflicts, the Council of Constance (1414–1418), issued the decrees *Haec Sancta*, *Frequens*, and *Sacrosancta*, establishing the authority of the council over the pope. The Council of Basel (1431–1449) reaffirmed *Sacrosancta*, attempting to strengthen the conciliar principles that had been practiced since the early church. Despite these efforts, the papacy continued to gain strength as the secular rulers

infallibility promised to the church was also possessed by the pope acting as its head, thus guaranteeing the inerrancy even of the pope’s individual doctrinal pronouncements. For a more complete explanation of these false documents, see footnote, p 115 of Abbe Vladimir Guette’s “The Papacy,” accessed March 12, 2014, www.orthodoxinfo.com/inquirers/guettee_the_papacy.pdf.

²⁰ “*Unum Sanctum*” in New Advent, accessed December 5, 2013, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15126a.htm>.

²¹ C. B. Moss, *The Old Catholic Movement: Its Origins and History*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2005), 13.

began to support the curialists and conciliarism began to decline.²² When half of Europe withdrew from the authority of the pope as a result of the Protestant Reformation, Pope Paul III (1534–1549) called the Council of Trent (1545–1563) in an attempt to restore Vatican's power. Conciliarism lost even more ground when that council reinforced the power of the papacy and began making claims of papal infallibility. This move generated opposition across Europe to the increasing centralization of the church and the decline of local episcopal authority.

The Origins of Old Catholicism

To understand the complex beginnings of the Old Catholic Church, it is important to know that the movement that led to the formation of the Old Catholic Church and the UU did not begin as an attempt to break away from the Roman Church. Rather, it was a plea from the Church of Utrecht to retain its integrity in the form of local authority, an authority that had been reinforced by Rome for centuries only to be challenged by the declarations of the Council of Trent. Utrecht believed that by maintaining local authority, it would be better able to maintain relationships within and between the local churches.

The Church of Utrecht

English missionary St. Willibrord (658–739), apostle to the Netherlands and first bishop of Utrecht, was first to evangelize the Frisians living in the tidal region along the North Sea coast and was eventually followed by his disciple, St. Boniface (~672–755). At the request of Pope Gregory II (669-731), Boniface moved his missionary efforts to

²² Ulrich L. Lerner, “Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim’s *Febronius*: A Censored Bishop and His Ecclesiology,” *Church History and Religious Culture* 88, no. 2 (2008): 207.

Germany, to establish the See of Cologne, which was ultimately given jurisdiction over Utrecht.

In the eleventh century, the political climate of Europe enveloped the administration of the Catholic church in some countries. With the Dutch under the Hapsburg rule, the bishops of Utrecht were made temporal princes and given the secular responsibility of defending the borders of Germany against invaders.²³ At that time, Pope Gregory VII (1028–1085) and the German monarchy were at great political odds. Aware of the turbulence among the German people, the pope, as a reprimand, took away the right of the secular authority in Germany to appoint their bishops and confined the spiritual jurisdiction of Germany to the Church of Utrecht.

In the twelfth century, Pope Eugene III (1145–1153) granted Bishop Heribert of Utrecht the right to elect successors in times of vacancy. This unique autonomy planted the seeds of what was to come. The prerogative of autonomy was reinforced by both the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the decree *Debitum Pastoralis* (1520), which was issued by Pope Leo X (1513–1521) to Philip of Burgundy, the fifty-seventh bishop of Utrecht. Andre' Queen tells us that in this decree the pope conceded to Philip that neither [Philip], nor his successors, nor any of their clergy or laity, should ever, in the first instance, have his cause evoked to any external tribunal, not even under pretense of any apostolic letters whatever; and that all such proceedings should be, *ipso facto*, null and void.²⁴

This proved to be the strongest argument for the ongoing autonomy of the Church of Utrecht. Following the Protestant Reformation, the bishops of Utrecht ceased to be

²³ Moss, 91.

²⁴ Andre' Queen, *Old Catholic: History, Ministry, Faith & Mission* (New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2003), 4.

temporal princes, but retained the autonomous right to elect new bishops when necessary and without a papal mandate.

In the Netherlands, the Protestant Reformation had a wide-ranging impact on the socio-political and religious milieus. In fact, several factors forced a ban on the exercise of the Catholic religion in the Netherlands: the influx of a number of Protestant denominations; the Eighty Years War (1566–1648); and the *Beeldenstorm* (statue storm) of 1566, during which many Catholic statues and icons were destroyed or defaced. Many clergy fled or went into hiding; however, they continued to practice their faith, along with committed laity, in houses and other private spaces.

Canon Dr. Weitse van der Velde, the current dean of the Metropolitan Chapter of Utrecht of the Dutch Old Catholic Church, tells of this trying time:

After 1580 deceased bishops could not be replaced by new diocesans. To cope with this new and difficult situation, Rome, in 1592, appointed a Vicar Apostolic for the Church in the Netherlands. For political reasons, this prelate Sasabout Vosmeer (1548–1614) could not bear the title of Archbishop of Utrecht. He and his successors were consecrated bishop on a foreign title, but in spite of that they were considered by their clergy as the ordinary of the diocese. These bishops managed in this new situation to uphold or restore the parochial system of the church and to govern her on a traditional basis.²⁵

In 1592, Rome sent Jesuits to the Netherlands to help reorient Utrecht's catholicity toward Rome; it immediately became apparent that Jesuit policies differed from those of Vicar General Vosmeer. Vosmeer and the Catholics of Holland were used to their autonomy. While they saw the pope as their lawful superior, they were

²⁵ Weitse van der Velde, "Who Are the Old Catholics?" (paper made available by Peter-Ben Smit for University of Utrecht course on Old Catholic Theology, Summer, 2013), 6.

determined that even he was bound to respect their canonical rights of local jurisdiction. The Jesuits, on the other hand, vowed absolute obedience to the pope and were resolved to see that others did likewise. According to Moss, “The Jesuits did their utmost, from the moment of their arrival in the country, to prevent the bishoprics from being filled.”²⁶ The Jesuits wanted to reconstruct the Catholic Church in the Netherlands in a fashion suitable to Rome and began to establish “Roman” churches in the same neighborhood as the churches of Utrecht. Despite being reprimanded by the pope, the Dutch archbishops, along with their secular government, clashed with Rome and the Jesuits openly and faithfully, committed to their well-established right to local authority.

The Jesuits refused to recognize the bishop as their ordinary and began to send to Rome accusations against the Church of Utrecht. When Petrus Codde (1648-1710) was named vicar general of Utrecht, the Jesuits accused him of Jansenism. Twice Codde was called to Rome and twice he was exonerated. Eventually the pope was persuaded to arbitrarily suspend Codde and, despite great protest from the majority of priests in the Netherlands, named Theodore de Cock pro vicar apostolic of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. In 1702, Moss writes, “the Chapters of Utrecht and Haarlem unanimously decided not to recognize the authority of de Cock on the grounds that the Pope had no canonical right to deprive even a vicar-apostolic, still less an archbishop, without trial and condemnation. From this point begins the schism between the two parties in the Dutch

²⁶ Moss, 97.

Roman Catholic Church.”²⁷ In 1704, Codde retired and the See of Utrecht remained vacant for several years.

In an attempt to restore its relationship with Rome, Utrecht made many appeals to the Vatican to have its autonomy recognized. After many failed petitions, the Church of Utrecht, with the help of French and Belgian allies, decided it could elect a new archbishop under its old canonical rights. On April 27, 1723, Cornelius Steenoven was elected archbishop by the Chapter of Utrecht. Rome ignored the notice of this election, so the Church of Utrecht prevailed upon Dominic Varlet, a French missionary and bishop of Babylon (who had taken up residence in Amsterdam), to perform the consecration. The pope refused to recognize Steenoven’s consecration and excommunicated him, his clergy, and all who followed him. Although the breach between Utrecht and Rome was now a fact, the church continued to exist and grow under the See of Utrecht. Refusing to follow the “new” direction of Rome, the Church of Utrecht became known as the Roman Catholics of the Old Episcopal Clergy and still considered itself to be a part of the undivided church. It understood itself to be “not so much a protest movement against increasing papal authority, but rather the continuation of the (autonomous) Church of Utrecht founded by St. Willibrord and, as such, authentic to the faith and order of the early church.”²⁸ That Utrecht continued to see itself as part of the undivided church despite Rome’s attempts to deny it of its lawful rights and autonomy is a perception of

²⁷ Ibid., 107.

²⁸ Peter-Ben Smit, *Old Catholic and Philippine Independent Ecclesiologies in History: The Catholic Church in Every Place* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2011), 57.

critical importance. It speaks to Utrecht's belief in and commitment to relationship, even when the dynamics are difficult.

When the next General Council, to which the See of Utrecht had so often appealed, finally met, it was 1870. Vatican I was convened and the hierarchy of the Old Catholic Church of Holland was not invited. The proclamations of infallibility and universal primacy were codified in the Vatican I bull *Pastor Aeternus*. Because of the deliberate exclusion of the Old Catholic clergy from Vatican I and the newly codified dogma of infallibility and jurisdiction, it was clear Utrecht had to reconsider its ecclesiological basis and affiliation with Rome.

The Church of Germany

In Germany, the response to the increasing power and control of the Vatican was seen as growing out of two main streams: the Enlightenment, with the emergent intellectualism of the laity, and the rigorous historical research being done at universities. When the German elector-archbishops met to choose a new emperor in 1740, they also expressed a wish for the pope to address some of the long-standing grievances of the German people. They complained that the pope had disregarded the decrees of Constance and Basel, that elections to the bishoprics were arbitrarily annulled, and that many other ecclesiastical injustices had been perpetrated against the German people.²⁹ Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim, a professor at Trier University, was asked to examine the constitution of the church in Germany to ensure it was in harmony with the civil law. In 1763, he published the book *De statu ecclesiae at legitima potestate Romani potificis* (On

²⁹ Moss, 142.

the Constitution of the Church and the Legitimate Power of the Pope: A Book Composed for the Purpose of Reuniting Separated Christians) under the pseudonym Febronius for fear of the consequences. In it, he advocated for the ecclesiological return to the structure of the ancient church and the dissolution of “redundant or harmful historical ballast.”³⁰ The book “successfully articulated the German dissatisfaction with the Holy See with vigorous conviction.”³¹ While some found it to be a “sound piece of scholarship that united the tradition of Conciliarism with the so-called Catholic Enlightenment,”³² the pope’s response was to condemn the book. This act only increased its audience, making what became known as Febronianism the cause célèbre of a Catholic intellectual revolution.

In response to Vatican I, academia was in turmoil. When the archbishop of Munich returned from Vatican I, Munich theological professor Ignaz von Döllinger, a major influence during the first Old Catholic period and often referred to as the “soul” of the movement,³³ accused the archbishop of creating a new church. Döllinger was a Roman Catholic priest who feared a schism and initially advised the bishops to “persist in respectful protest.”³⁴ Despite Döllinger’s attempts to peacefully redress the changes of Vatican I, the pope perceived him to be aligned with the opposition and, because of that perception, Döllinger’s own bishop promptly excommunicated him. Other professors in Munich and Bonn, along with many lay people, were more forceful with their objections and, in the face of excommunication, began founding their own parishes. Their hope was

³⁰ Lerner, 217.

³¹ Ibid., 206.

³² Ibid., 205.

³³ “The Old Catholics,” *America* (May 1, 1909), 58.

³⁴ Van der Velde, 11

“to provide protesting Catholics, who, by excommunication, had been excluded from the sacraments, with normal church life within a church organization.”³⁵ These scholars, well aware of Utrecht’s history and its “unquestionable ancient apostolic succession,”³⁶ began to turn to Utrecht for episcopal oversight and ordination of new priests. Led by Johann Friedrich von Schilts, Professor of Canon Law at the University of Prague, they also encouraged those objecting to the decree *Pastor Aeternus* and its new dogmas, to create a way to carry on the Catholic faith of the early church. As the growing protest church in Germany had no bishops, they turned to Utrecht for confirmations and ordinations until they could elect their own bishops. In June 1873, Josef Hubert Reinkens was elected by twenty-one priests and fifty-six lay representatives of the parishes to be the first Old Catholic bishop of Germany.

The Swiss Church

Like the movement in Germany, the Swiss dissent came from two sources, political and ecclesiological. Unlike the German protest, the Swiss revolt was led by laity, whose primary objection was political. The laity’s protest had to do with their conviction that the recent claims to universal jurisdiction by the Vatican were an unlawful attempt to interfere with the affairs of the Swiss national church. The Swiss had a long history of opposition to the papacy. They still remembered the two Gallican councils that had been held, one just beyond their borders at Constance and the other in Swiss territory at Basel. The Council of Constance (1414-1418) had declared the authority of the council over the papacy in the declaration *Sacrosancta*. This was done to reunite the church, divided by

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Caruso, 30.

schism since 1378 and represents one of “the highpoints of conciliar thought.”³⁷ At the Council of Basel (1431-1435) the decree *Sacrosancta* was renewed, declaring that even the pope is subject to the direction of the council. The Swiss were convinced that the papal power being claimed by the Vatican was illegal. In August 1870, the cantonal governments agreed to ask the bishop of Basel not to publish the dogma of papal infallibility and to allow the federal government to “maintain the rights of its citizens against the papal claims.”³⁸

Many of the Swiss theologians were proponents of Döllinger’s work regarding ecclesial reform. But the Swiss bishops had all voted with the majority at Vatican I, so they, and most of the clergy, would never lead the revolt. The clergy that stood in opposition to Rome were either suspended or excommunicated. What finally turned the tide were large meetings of laity who called for the constitution to be revised in order to protect them against clerical demands. When their pleas were rejected, Eduard Herzog, priest and professor of theology at Lucerne, resigned his academic position and took charge of the Old Catholic congregation at Krefeld, Germany. He would later become the first Old Catholic bishop in Switzerland.

All three of the churches had their own histories, their own cultures, and their own reasons to seek a way to remain Catholic in the rapidly changing world. The Church of Utrecht stood for the foundational history of an undivided church and the argument for local jurisdiction as it was practiced through the centuries. The German church affirmed

³⁷ Paul Halsall, “Medieval Sourcebook: Council of Constance: *Sacrosanct*, 1415,” Internet Medieval Sourcebook, accessed February 28, 2014, <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/constance1.asp>.

³⁸ Moss, 244.

its commitment to intellectual growth as a reflection of its surrounding culture. This was done with a strong desire to infuse their ancient faith with modern sensibilities. The Swiss church confirmed the importance and the power of the laity. The men who represented these churches agreed to come together, with all of their differences, to see how the Holy Spirit was working.

Foundational Elements

From this history, we can appreciate four foundational elements that are essential to that body of pilgrims who call themselves Old Catholics: the belief in *local authority* and the role of the bishop as established in the ancient church; participation in a *conciliar form of governance* in which the council is the ultimate authority in the church; *unity in diversity* as manifested by the encouragement of local traditions and customs in liturgical practices; and *ecumenism* — the effort to bring greater union to the people of God. Each of these principles plays an important role in the practice of Old Catholicism. Each of them focuses on a need for relationship. Each of them has its roots in the history of the Old Catholic Church. Together they are the cornerstones of TOCCUSA.

Local Authority

The development of Old Catholicism was not a deliberate attempt to create a new church (and may even be seen as something that happened against the will of those who found it necessary). Rather it was a movement that objected to the growing power of Rome and the declarations made at the Vatican I, specifically the infallibility of the pope and his universal jurisdiction. The declarations made at Vatican I were not about matters of faith—they were about authority (i.e., church governance) and power. Acceptance of

the Vatican I declarations would have deprived the churches of Holland and Germany rights of autonomy that had been granted and declared unbreakable.³⁹ The churches that eventually came to form the UU felt that by establishing papal infallibility and universal jurisdiction as dogma, the pope was attempting to form a new church with new rules—rules that ignored the relationship between and among bishops, local clergy, and laity.

Conciliar Government

The ecclesiology of the Old Catholic Church is relational. Authority is held in the conciliar structure of the synod. The Old Catholic Church has best been defined by Robert Caruso as “a concept that moves beyond institutional governance and emphasizes rather the *intrinsic relational character* of the church between God, human beings and all of creation.”⁴⁰ Caruso points to the Council of Constance (1414–1418) as “significant for Old Catholics because its conciliar authority was real, and it established precedence in the Catholic Church that power can be and should be properly delegated by all the faithful, and not exclusively in the *plenitude potestasis* of the papacy.”⁴¹ While ancient in its origin, contemporary Old Catholicism has also been influenced by the writings of a number of Orthodox and other theologians who emphasize the Trinitarian and relational nature of the church resulting in the current theanthropic perspective.⁴²

³⁹ Concordat of Worms (1122) and *Debitum Pastoralis*, (1520). For more information on how these papal decrees influenced the formation of the Old Catholic Church, see Queen, *Old Catholic: History, Ministry, Faith & Mission*.

⁴⁰ Robert W. Caruso, *The Old Catholic Church: Understanding the Origin, Essence, and Theology of a Church that is Unknown and Misunderstood by Many in North America* (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2009) 3, emphasis mine.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴² See works by John Zizioulas, Miroslav Volf, Paul Sponheim, and Douglas Kreighbaum explored in chapter three.

Unity in Diversity

The movements that took place in the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland that ultimately led to the establishment of the Old Catholic Church followed a number of lengthy and complex upheavals that affected the political, social, and religious landscape. The fall of the Roman Empire, the Great Schism of 1054, the fluctuating papal power, the struggles between church and state, the Reformation, and the French Revolution all contributed to changing boundaries, power, and allegiances in Europe. The once-undivided church and the once-mighty empires had been fractured; nationalism was growing and strengthening. In the formation of the UU, differences in historical, political, and social contexts were overcome when the first Old Catholic bishops met to “lay down what they had in common and formulate criteria on how they should conduct their relations with one another.”⁴³ By accepting their differences in smaller matters, they could come to agreement on the issues of importance.

Ecumenism

The actions that culminated in the Declaration of Utrecht were supported, in great part, by the Anglican Church. The seeds of ecumenical partnership were sewn when the Anglicans not only actively supported the Old Catholic movement, but even sent contingents of Anglicans to those first Old Catholic conferences. The work of these conferences resulted in the Declaration of Utrecht and the alliance of the churches of Utrecht, Germany, and Switzerland in the UU. The relationship between the Anglican Church and the UU, forged at these meetings, provided the foundation for the Bonn

⁴³ Jan Visser, “The Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht” *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 3, no. 1 (2003): 72.

Agreement (1931), which established full communion between them, further emphasizing their relational, ecumenical natures.

Beginnings of a New Church

The 1871 Munich Congress of Catholics was the first of several conferences that led to the signing of the Declaration of Utrecht. Several hundred participants, both laity and clergy, were present, including Church of England and Protestant observers. The Church of England joined voices with the movement claiming that Vatican I was not even a true ecumenical council because it excluded other expressions of Catholicism that were outside the purview of Rome (for example, Eastern Orthodox and Anglican) and because the voting was not unanimous. It also charged the council with ignoring the dogmatic importance of the Councils of Constance and Basel.

The Anglicans had also opposed the ultramontane ideology that emphasized the authority of the pope over temporal affairs and had been further irritated by Pius X's Syllabus of Errors, which "attacked principles of liberty and toleration fundamental to modern democracy."⁴⁴ Despite that, some Anglicans thought there would be a chance of being invited to Vatican I and that, with some irenic overtures to Rome, there would be an opportunity for the two churches to draw together. Although Rome refused to invite Anglican bishops to the council, the bishops followed the council's activities and were soon aware of the "profound differences of opinion among the Roman Catholics concerning the precise nature of papal infallibility."⁴⁵ The Anglicans supported the

⁴⁴ Robert Fitzsimons, "The Church of England and the first Vatican Council" *Journal of Religious History* 27, no.1 (2003): 30.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 33.

minority at the council who were against infallibility and supreme universal jurisdiction and, like the minority, “protested against the assumption of the title of Oecumenical Council by the episcopal assembly convened by the patriarch of Rome, on the ground that it ignored the ‘due canonical rights’ of all those parts of the Christian church that lay outside the Roman obedience.”⁴⁶

Once again, it is crucial to point out that the men, clergy and laity alike, who were responsible for bringing churches in the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland to this point were focused on keeping the church locally based. They understood the structure of church to be a communion of local churches and felt there were dangers in the centralization of power. They believed that taking the focus away from the local church would undermine the pastoral relationship between clergy and laity. They felt that the church was turning away from the mono-episcopate church of the first few centuries and that the role of the local bishop would be compromised by juridical allegiance to the pope. They believed the church had so altered the rules that they could no longer bear witness to it. They saw themselves guided by the Spirit toward a reformation of the new direction taken by the Vatican I Council and the Roman Catholic Church.⁴⁷ They wanted no part of this “new” Catholic Church. The men, ordained and non-ordained, who gathered at the Old Catholic congresses, wanted to continue the ways of the ancient church. Recent events had confirmed that even with different national interests, they could come together to form an association of churches committed to practicing their

⁴⁶ Ibid., 36.

⁴⁷ John E. B. Mayor, trans. and ed., *Bishop Reinkens’ Speeches on Christian Union and Old Catholic Prospects: Delivered in the Congress of Cologne and Constance: With a Preface* (London: Rivingtons, 1874), 2.

faith as the once-undivided church had done. In 1889, the Declaration of Utrecht was signed and they became the Old Catholic Church, Union of Utrecht (UU).

The Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States

In the late nineteenth century, Old Catholic missionaries came to the United States. They brought with them a spirit of newness and independence, which found fertile ground in the rapidly expanding and diversified states. In 1897, Stanislas Koslowski was appointed the first Old Catholic bishop for North America; he had episcopal oversight of groups of scattered Polish people who resented the Irish dominance of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1907, Francis Hodur succeeded him as bishop and began the Polish National Church (PNCC), the only church in the United States to claim membership in the UU. That membership was ultimately terminated by the UU in November 2003 over the refusal of the PNCC to recognize the ordination of women.

Over the years, a number of Catholic bishops in the United States and nearby countries were consecrated and later broke their ecclesiastical ties with Rome and established their own independent catholic churches; this resulted in what is referred to today as the “independent sacramental movement.”⁴⁸ Able to trace their lineage back to one ordained Roman Catholic bishop or another, they all claim the apostolic succession of Rome. Many call themselves Old Catholics and proclaim the faith of the first seven Ecumenical Councils.

In May 2006, the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church (TEC), along with a representative of the UU, convened a meeting in Queens, New York, to inquire into the

⁴⁸ For a scathing critique of the independent movement, see Peter F. Anson, *Bishops at Large* (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2006).

state of the various Old Catholic churches in the United States. They invited a number of bishops in the independent sacramental movement to share their experiences and look to the future. At that meeting, the Conference of North American Old Catholic Bishops was established as “a vehicle of unity and communion formation among the invited bishops who attended and remained engaged to the foundational process.”⁴⁹ During the next few years, some of the bishops dropped out of the conference and others joined. After four years of monthly talks among the bishops, hours of education with the laity, and approval by the synods of the remaining five independent jurisdictions, consensus was declared. On September 24, 2010, at Marin-on-St. Croix, Minnesota, these five jurisdictions⁵⁰ became The Old Catholic Church, Province of the United States (TOCCUSA), pledging, as did the UU before them, unity in diversity, the local authority of the bishop, a synodal structure at all levels of church, and a commitment to ecumenism.

The same diversity that brought spirit to the UU continues to be celebrated in TOCCUSA today, a tribute not only to the history of the Old Catholic Church but to the interconnectedness and example of relationship embodied in the Trinitarian theology that we practice. Understanding the history that led to the Declaration of Utrecht and the formation of TOCCUSA will help the reader appreciate TOCCUSA’s model of ministry.

⁴⁹ Conference of North American Old Catholic Bishops Unity Statement, accessed 9/5/2013, <http://conferenceofoldcatholicbishops.org/index.php>.

⁵⁰ The dioceses of New England, the Mid-Atlantic (Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey), Washington, D.C., Holy Cross (Minnesota), and Napa (California).

Chapter 3

Theological and Theoretical Foundations: Nurturing Seeds of Relationship

A spiritual director recently shared a Jesuit saying with me: “If we get them before they’re seven, we have them for life.”¹ In other words, when established early in life, our spiritual practices, our habits, and our patterns of thought and behavior, are very difficult to change. Yet how we worship *is* changing. Today, people want to choose how they worship, and many are electing to leave the large, institutional congregations in favor of smaller, more intimate faith communities. This trend challenges us to hone our relationship knowledge and abilities so that we can effectively minister to and with God’s people: to provide guidance to those who come looking for that relationship that heals all wounds, offer the peace that passes all understanding, and provide opportunities for transformation. If people are changing the way they worship, it is imperative that we change the way we pastor.

Currently, many of the clergy in TOCCUSA are individuals who spent their formative years in the pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church, where they frequently experienced clergy behavior based on the classic, hierarchical military ideal put forth by Constantine when he declared Christianity to be the official religion of the Roman Empire. This ideal became part of the unassailable tradition of the Catholic Church and generated a group of professional people whose functioning depended on blind obedience

¹ Nancy Kellar, private conversation with author, October 23, 2013.

and the fear of administrative reprisal. But this need for authority and control by the clergy served to strengthen the hierarchy of the church, not the people in the pews.

Additionally, the old Roman Catholic model discouraged lasting relationships between laity and clergy. The regular transfer of clergy from parish to parish diminished the opportunity to develop enduring relationships. Given that priests are prohibited from engaging in close and intimate relationships, it is no wonder so many fell into a trap of perverted expressions of sexuality and power as well as abuse. The sex abuse scandal has hurt not only the victims, but also the church, and has driven many of the faithful away. It is time to do things differently. Any church that wants to remain relevant in today's world *must* do things differently.

Based on the history presented in the previous chapter, I hope it is evident that relationships are a key element in TOCCUSA: relationships between bishops; between bishops, clergy, and synods; between clergy within a diocese; between clergy and laity; and among the laity themselves. These relationships become even more crucial when we gather in our National Assembly to direct the course of our church. It makes sense, then, to begin by looking at the relationship *par excellence*: the Trinity.

A Trinitarian Perspective

In the introduction of her award-winning book *God for Us*, theologian Catherine Mowry LaCuna states, “The only option for Christian theology is to be trinitarian.”² She says this approach is “more consistent with the Bible, creeds, and the liturgy, and also one that makes it possible for theology of God to be intimately related to ecclesiology,

² Catherine Mowry LaCuna, *God for Us: The Trinity & Christian Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 3.

sacramental theology, grace, ethics, spirituality, and anthropology.”³ In other words, *everything we do*. LaCuna makes it clear that the guiding principles for exploring the triune mystery of God are grace and redemption as utilized in God’s economy of salvation (*economia*). This economic Trinity is revealed through Christ and the Spirit and is manifested through relationships with God and one another (*theologia*). It will become evident in chapter four that these perspectives are central to the TOCCUSA model of ministry. A look at the development of Trinitarian theology will provide some background.

Trinitarian doctrine has long been a focus of theological discussion. It was Origen (185-254) who initially attempted to describe the Trinity. Origen presented a hierarchical structure making the Father the absolute One who generates the Son and, through the Son, the Holy Spirit. Roderick Leupp points out that “Origen’s admission that there is rank within the Triune God … demands the conclusion of subordinationism within the Triune God.”⁴ This thought was supported by the Alexandrian priest Arius (256–336), who denied Jesus’ divinity and equality with the Father. That stand caused such controversy that the Council of Nicaea was called in 325 CE to address the issue. At that Council, Athanasius of Alexandria (c.300–373), successfully argued for and advanced the notion that the Father and the Son were of the same substance (*homoousia*), and promoted the writing of the Nicene Creed. Despite the novelty of this concept (novel because *homoousia* was never mentioned in scripture), it became orthodox doctrine and

³ Ibid., 2.

⁴ Roderick T. Leupp, *Knowing the Name of God: A Trinitarian Tapestry of Grace, Faith & Community*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 63.

“steered the conversation from metaphysics and ontology back to soteriology, the doctrine of salvation.”⁵

Even after the Council of Nicaea, theological debates ensued. In the Greek theology of the East, the Cappadocians (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus) kept soteriology as a central concern; by the end of the fourth century, they had developed a Trinitarian theology, which focused on God’s self-manifestation in creation. Augustine, following the Latin theology of the West, had a different approach. He focused his Trinitarian theology on the unity of the divine nature and relations within the godhead.⁶

These divergent theologies spanned the centuries with more emphasis placed on the interrelationship between the divine persons and less on God’s relationship with people. For many, this suggested a theoretical chasm between God and humanity, implying, perhaps, that there was an “unbreachable ontological difference.”⁷ This perceived chasm had a significant influence on worship and liturgy. LaCuna goes on to state,

In scholastic theology, the doctrine of the Trinity was identified as the science of God’s inner relatedness. The result of this was a one-sided theology of God that has little to do with the economy of Christ and the Spirit, with the themes of Incarnation and grace, and therefore little to do

⁵ Ibid., 70.

⁶ LaCuna, 12.

⁷ Ibid., 210.

with Christian life....By the twelfth or thirteenth century, theology, liturgy and spirituality had in the West gone their separate ways.⁸

In the twentieth century, Karl Rahner, a German Jesuit priest, aroused interest in Trinitarian thinking for modern Catholic theologians;⁹ in doing so, Rahner helped reconstitute a more coherent spirituality. Rahner maintained that there is an essential unity of *theologia* and *economia* because God is by nature relational (within the godhead) and communicates with the world through the saving grace of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Rahner's conception of the Triune God has led to a revitalized interest in and perspective of Trinitarian theology for contemporary Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox theologians alike.

One of the more influential and current Orthodox voices on the Trinity is that of John Zizioulas, Metropolitan of Pergamon, in the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. His Trinitarian perspective echoes both the theology and the ecclesiology of the Old Catholic Church. Zizioulas sees the local church holding all the authority it needs to be authentically catholic and would prefer the universal church to be organized as a communion of all churches. His hermeneutical approach is that “the being of God is a relational being: without the concept of communion it would not be possible to speak of the being of God.”¹⁰ In accord with the church fathers, Ignatius, Irenaeus, and Athanasius, Zizioulas argues that we approach the being of God through the experience of the ecclesial community. He states, “The being of God could be known only through

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970) for an in-depth treatment of his theology.

¹⁰ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), 17.

personal relationships and personal love. Being means life, and life means *communion*.¹¹

This idea suggests our shared essence with God.

Miroslav Wolf is a prominent Protestant theologian who brings his Trinitarian hermeneutics to focus on the ecclesiology of the church. In *After Our Likeness*, Wolf first establishes a dialogue between the theologies of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (prior to his election to the papacy) and the aforementioned John Zizioulas in order to provide an ecumenical ecclesiological context.¹² Wolf then presents his own thoughts of church as an image of the Triune God, which, he unabashedly says, “stands in close affinity with [the] egalitarian agenda of feminist ecclesiology.”¹³ In doing so, he develops “a nonhierarchical but truly communal ecclesiology based on a nonhierarchical doctrine of the Trinity.”¹⁴ Similar to Zizioulas, he suggests,

It is not the mutual perichoresis of human beings, but rather the indwelling of the Spirit common to everyone that makes the church into a communion corresponding to the Trinity, a communion in which personhood and sociality are equiprimal. Just as God constitutes human beings through their social and natural relations as independent persons, so also does the Holy Spirit indwelling them constitute them through ecclesial relations as an intimate communion of independent persons.¹⁵

¹¹ Ibid., 16, emphasis his.

¹² Miroslav Wolf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998).

¹³ Ibid., 2. In particular he credits Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza’s *Discipleship of Equals* (New York: Crossroads, 1993) and Letty M. Russell’s *Church in the Round* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993).

¹⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁵ Ibid., 213.

The three aforementioned theologians present but a small sample of Trinitarian theology and ecclesiology. The following begins to address, more specifically, the relational aspects of a Trinitarian theology utilized by TOCCUSA, our pilgrim church.

Relational Theology

Relational theology is not new. Any theology that focuses on a Triune God must, by definition, be relational. Rather than an esoteric, academic, or philosophical discussion of God, I believe that relational theology is the *practical* exercise of “god-talk.” It focuses on what God is and how God works in order to illuminate the transformative nature of healthy relationship.

Thomas Oord, in a book of collected essays on relational theology, has suggested that, “Most conventional Christian theologies have sometimes ignored relational ideas and language.”¹⁶ While I would challenge that statement, he does argue that theology that ignores relational ideas and language is illogical and irrelevant to our being because we are created in the image of God. This is well substantiated by scripture, which describes the being and activity of a relational God who wants to be with and relate to us!

Sharing what we think and feel is conveyed to those with whom we have relationships, for the most part, by using language. Stephen Seamands tells us that “the doctrine of the Trinity has been described as the grammar of the Christian faith … [and] enables us to speak rightly about the God who is revealed in Scripture.”¹⁷ With a firm

¹⁶ Thomas Jay Oord, “What is Relational Theology?” in *Relational Theology: A Contemporary Introduction*, ed. Brint Montgomery, Thomas Jay Oord, and Karen Winslow (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 1.

¹⁷ Stephen Seamands, *Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian Service* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 11.

grasp on Trinitarian “grammar,” Paul Sponheim, in his book *Speaking of God: Relational Theology*, addresses the “What?” and the “So What?” of our speaking.¹⁸ He emphasizes that people, both inside and outside the church, speak of God, and that as Christians we have a responsibility to speak of God because we are the “insiders.” It is one thing to know *about* God and another to *know* God. To know God demands relationship with God and leads us, Sponheim says, to ask questions such as where is God? What is God up to? How is God working? Carefully listening and watching for answers to those questions will draw us deeper into relationship with God and, ultimately, allow us to speak *for* God, something that can only be done legitimately within an intimate relationship.

Having established that God is relational, and having received some answers to the above questions, we can say that knowing God gives us information about how God relates and is at work in our world. Sponheim reminds us of the “omnis”¹⁹ of God and the love of God—a love so courageous that God sent the Son into a very confused and dangerous world, not just to save us, but to show us how we can relate to one another—with total inclusivity and acceptance, seeking the “well-being, the flowering, the good of the other.”²⁰ Sponheim suggests that knowing that the Incarnate One is there as a model for us can embolden us to turn away from a fear-based religion and into a relationship of freedom, where self-giving and loving service to all creation is the mode, offering a ministry of presence in word and deed.

¹⁸ Paul R. Sponheim, *Speaking of God: Relational Theology* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006).

¹⁹ Omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence.

²⁰ Sponheim, 45.

In love the Creator has willed the being and blessing (and burden) of a world of genuine freedom. That world and the agents who occupy it will necessarily figure into what is possible within the divine will. God has willed that the right direction can be discerned within that mix of factors.²¹

Realizing the strength that grows out of choosing to be in a relationship with God, Sponheim goes on to ask, “So what?” His answer is that this strength fortifies us to speak *to* God (prayer), *for* God (apologetics and evangelism), and *of* God in the face of evil and suffering, and that we do so with a “sense that there is a realm of the ultimate that we ignore at our peril.”²²

Throughout *Speaking of God*, Sponheim (like Zizioulas) gives credit to feminist theologians for their insistence on the concept of mutuality in relationship as well as their determination to neutralize the language we use when speaking of God. With regard to mutuality, Sponheim says, “Mutuality, the real test of the genuineness of a relationship, does not require equality.”²³ He also quotes Elizabeth Johnson: “Insofar as each is directed toward the other with reciprocal interest and intimacy, the relationship is mutual.”²⁴ This is the relationship that God wants with us and that we need with each other.

²¹ Ibid., 100.

²² Ibid., 138.

²³ Ibid., 29.

²⁴ Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroads, 1992), 228, quoted in *ibid.*, 29.

Doug Kreighbaum reasons that a focus on relational theology is the way to overcome many of the problems in church today.²⁵ He claims that most of those problems stem from relational issues and that we need to take seriously the exhortations and instructions offered in the Bible on how God's people are to treat one another. In a very practical manner, he makes heavy use of John's gospel, which he believes contains unique relational insights, to make his point. He begins with what he calls the "relational theology of the Last Supper."²⁶ With the washing of the feet, Jesus begins to tell his disciples about the importance of relationships. His actions serve as an example of how they are to be in relationship with one another and his words underline that statement. "I give you an example that you also should do" (John 13:15). More than what they should do, he tells them *how* they should do it: "A new commandment I give you, that you should love one another as I have loved you. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35). Jesus did not suggest it, he commanded it! In his final prayer to send the disciples out to continue his mission, he prays, "As you have sent me into the world, I also send them into the world" (John 17:18). Kriegbaum states that this prayer

references the relationship of the Godhead...that the same relational unity that the Godhead had when He was sent, would be the foundation of what they would walk in as they were being sent out into the earth...the same relational unity that exist in the Trinity...a divine community/family

²⁵ Doug Kreighbaum, *Relational Theology: Recapturing Powerful Relationships in the Church* (Apopka, FL: Reliance Media, 2009).

²⁶ Ibid., 21.

...connected in a way that has individuality immersed in complete unity.²⁷

This unity is what Zizioulas calls “communion,” and I believe both Kriegbaum and Zizioulas are talking about God’s corporate nature to which we are also called. Our one-to-one relationships are, of course, the beginning. And we are asked to do still more. Kriegbaum reminds us that God “wants a community...in which He can dwell and reveal Himself...[so we can] overcome our intense selfishness and isolation, and...reflect the nature of the Godhead among us.”²⁸ It is in this communion/community that God enables the Spirit to work, sending us out to care for humanity and all creation. The fact of being in communion is a message in itself. I am reminded of Marshall McLuhan’s famous phrase “The medium is the message,”²⁹ and I marvel at the communal joy when gatherings, large or small, are united with a single focus. It seems not to matter if the actions are about worship, bringing food to the local homeless shelter, or singing Christmas carols at a nursing home—when done as a group in relationship to God and one another, the message of God’s love is powerful to all involved.

Gathering in spiritual community has benefits, not the least of which is that it provides yet another context for God’s relational nature. Just as the Trinity is God’s three distinct persons together in unity, our own spiritual communities and parishes allow our diverse world to come together in loving relationship. Even more than God wants us to do the tasks involved in being community, God wants us to be in relationship. Robert

²⁷ Ibid., 27.

²⁸ Ibid., 33-34.

²⁹ Phrase coined by McLuhan to indicate the change in inter-personal dynamics made possible by “any extension of ourselves.” For a more complete explanation, see Mark Federman, “What is the Meaning of The Medium is the Message?” accessed March 6, 2014, http://individual.utoronto.ca/markfederman/article_mediumisthemessage.htm.

Slocum cites the work of Scottish philosopher John Macmurray saying, “Our knowledge of each other and ourselves can be realized only through mutual self-revelation that is shared ‘when we love one another.’”³⁰ Slocum adamantly makes the point that it is not the task, but the relationship that matters. Known as the “people of God,” our defining characteristic is relational, not empirical or functional.

We are called to relationships of love rather than task or function in the life of the Church....No assortment of programs, activities or diversions will fill the void if a relational context is missing....congregational growth means drawing others into authentic personal relationship in community... [so that] our distinctness as persons is not lost in the unity of the Church.³¹

Slocum goes on to stress that each individual’s uniqueness is not meant to become invisible in community; rather the individual’s distinctiveness is brought to life within the relational context of community.

In this section I have addressed issues of language, mutuality, context, and love. These are integral to the hermeneutics of relational theology. At the risk of sounding trite, I want to close this section with a syllogism. God is relationship. God is love. Therefore, relationship is love when done in a godly fashion. In Larry Shelton’s words, “Relational theology emphasizes the centrality of love for effective pastoral application of one’s relationship with God.”³²

³⁰ John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1991), 211-12, quoted in Robert B. Slocum, “Kingdom Come: Preliminaries for a Relational Theology of Hope,” *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 3 (2000): 571-72.

³¹ Ibid., 576.

³² R. Larry Shelton, “The Person and Work of Christ,” in *Relational Theology*, 14-17.

Relational-Cultural Theory

As I mention in chapter one, Leonardo Boff referred to the church as unbalanced. He also commented that the church has experienced a “shift of the ecclesial axis” and accompanied this observation with the message that “theology must listen to what the ‘social sciences’—or better, the sciences of the social—have to say from their meditation on the relation between communitarian and societal aspects of human life.”³³

Consider this sobering statistic in a recent newspaper editorial: the Centers for Disease Control reported that in 2010 more people committed suicide (> 38,000) than were killed in motor vehicle accidents (< 34,000).³⁴ Mental health professionals know that a sense of isolation has been identified as a significant factor in suicide attempts and that isolation is the result of feeling disconnected. Disconnection in relationships happen when someone is misunderstood, invalidated, excluded, or humiliated and, in defense, builds a psychological wall to protect his or her vulnerability rather than address the injury. Too often, disconnection can lead to isolation and enormous private pain. The consequences of such wounds must not be ignored because they rob us all of the peace that Jesus gives us and they stand in the way of healthy relationships.

Psychological wounds are not the only ones that damage individuals and lead to isolation and despair. Social wounds exist, too: the oppressed, the marginalized, the poor, and those living outside of the “norm” often experience separation. People have experienced exclusion for reasons of color, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression,

³³ Boff, Leonardo, *Ecclesogenesis: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church*, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986), 4-5.

³⁴ “To Stem Suicide Epidemic, Reach Out to Those at Risk,” *Portland Press Herald*, October 18, 2013, Editorial section.

and economic status, to name a few. In addition, we all realize that our culture is increasingly automated and Internet-driven, and those conditions decrease the number of human connections. (Recall how happy it makes you when you are in search of information and a *live* person finally answers the phone!) Although Jesus did not have to deal with the electronic realities of today, he certainly saw that being outside of or apart from community was a source of human suffering. His healing actions were always to reunite people with community, to bring them back into relationship. Psychologically, some could say that reinstating human connection is what “heals” them. Socially, we can say these are matters of justice and necessary social advocacy.

In the 1960s, another man of God, Martin Luther King, Jr., began demanding justice for black people. The nation that had been lulled into a sense of complacency and entitlement after World War II began to wake up. The Vietnam War and the justice movements of the 1960s (the black movement, the women’s movement, and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender movement) raised awareness of the many battlefronts in our own country, and people began looking for ways to restore justice and peace. The personal had become political not just for Martin Luther King, Jr., but also for many people in many circumstances. It was during this time that social scientists and clinicians were exploring women’s experiences. The growing conviction that women were being “misunderstood and misrepresented by traditional psychodynamic models”³⁵ provided the stimulus that would lead them, and the country, into what Pulitzer Prize-winning author

³⁵ Judith V. Jordan, “A Relational-Cultural Model: Healing Through Mutual Empathy,” *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 65, no. 1 (2001): 92. These “traditional” models were based on studies of male social, moral, and psychological development done by mostly men.

Christina Robb calls “the relational revolution.”³⁶ It was time to look at the developmental journey of women.

Carol Gilligan, Jean Baker Miller, and Judith Herman were the women responsible for beginning this revolution in relational psychology that led to new developmental theories and ultimately the growth of relational-cultural theory (RCT). Working independently in the fields of psychiatry and psychology, their geographic proximity (Cambridge, Wellesley, and Somerville, Massachusetts, respectively) undoubtedly aided them as they began to consult with one another to discover “the political and psychological power of relationship.”³⁷

Stimulated by the Vietnam War and the *Roe v. Wade* ruling in 1973, Gilligan was exploring and writing about issues of morality and decision making when she encountered the absence of women’s voices in the political debates surrounding these issues. Her recognition of gender imbalance and inequality in the academic and clinical worlds led her to write the groundbreaking *In a Different Voice*, in which she challenged the findings of Lawrence Kohlberg’s stages of moral development.³⁸ Gilligan declared that men and women think and speak differently when it comes to facing ethical dilemmas, and said that Kohlberg’s conclusions were drawn out of context—the context of relationship. So she began listening, first to women and then to men as well. The “different voice” she heard from women reflected the constant yearning for connection.

³⁶ Christina Robb, *This Changes Everything: The Relational Revolution in Psychology* (New York: Picador, 2007), xi.

³⁷ Ibid., xvii.

³⁸ Kohlberg’s model, based on a study of male development, concluded that women were less moral because they acted more out of care than principle. Kohlberg’s model emphasized justice to the exclusion of other moral values. See Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development: Moral Stages and the Idea of Justice* (New York: HarperCollins), 1981.

This was a radical concept, because her work was done in the 1970s, when the psychological theories taught focused on development of self as an autonomous and independent being, ignoring context and relationship. Gilligan's book challenged the patriarchal world by legitimizing the relational voice: "A voice that insists on staying in connection...so that psychological separations which have long been justified in the name of autonomy, selfhood and freedom no longer appear as the *sine qua non* of human development but as a human problem."³⁹ The problem, as Gilligan saw it, presented a moral dilemma: a conflict between showing mercy or meting out justice (the strict legalistic form of justice). What repeatedly emerged in Gilligan's work with women was the mandate to care, and what she perceived as a moral necessity for *all* people—to "discern and alleviate the 'real and recognizable trouble' of this world."⁴⁰

For men, the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfillment. Women's insistence on care is at first self-critical rather than self-protective, while men initially conceive obligation to others negatively in terms of noninterference. Development for both sexes would therefore seem to entail an integration of right and responsibilities through the discovery of the complementarity of these disparate views.

For women, the integration of rights and responsibilities takes place through an understanding of the psychological logic of relationships. This understanding tempers the self-destructive potential of a self-critical

³⁹ Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), xiii.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 100.

morality by asserting the need of all persons for care. For men, recognition through experience of the need for more active responsibility in taking care corrects the potential indifference of a morality of noninterference and turns attention from the logic to the consequences of choice. In the development of postconventional ethical understanding, women come to see the violence inherent in inequality, while men come to see the limitations of a conception of justice blinded to the differences in human life.⁴¹

Miller was a psychiatrist who, in her clinical work, became distressed at the amount of discrimination and oppression her female patients experienced, while often simultaneously carrying all the responsibility for the relationships in the family. She had become aware that “most women find a sense of value and effectiveness if they experience all of their life activity arising from a context of relationships and as leading on into a greater sense of connection rather than a sense of separation.”⁴² Miller began to understand the harm being caused by the covert conflict within the male-female dichotomy and began to challenge the politics of dominance between genders. When dominance of any kind exists in relationship, there is inequality; and, says Miller, “within a framework of inequality the existence of conflict is denied and the means to engage openly in conflict are excluded.”⁴³ In this setting, real issues are not addressed and people are denied the possibility of growth through the resolution of problems. Miller concluded that far more important than focusing on an individual development of self (the

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Jean Baker Miller, “Connections, Disconnections and Violations” *Work In Progress*, no. 33 (Wellesley, MA: Stone Center Working Paper Series, 1988), 1.

⁴³ Jean Baker Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 13.

psychological milieu of the time) was concentrating on “how people can build empowering relationships, which, in turn, empower all of the people in those relationships.”⁴⁴ In her revolutionary book *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, published in 1976, she said, “We must recognize that [connection] is a requirement for the existence of human beings,” and that human psychological growth depends on relationships to motivate it.⁴⁵ Cultivating ties to one another and allowing for the differences within relationships encourages individuals to become truly themselves, develop their authenticity, and enhance their creativity. Becoming oneself inspires self-determination, the ability to engage in open and honest conflict, and participate in the change this world needs.

Herman was no stranger to violence (before she went to medical school, she had been a freedom rider in Mississippi during the most brutal period of the civil rights movement), but she did not expect the violence she encountered when she started up a storefront psychiatric clinic in a working-class neighborhood. As a result of the stories she heard from her patients, she and her team began to focus their work on victims of rape, wife beating, and incest, because they “came to understand that these crimes were a culturally sanctioned system of terror that served the same function in the politics of sex as did lunch laws⁴⁶ in the politics of ‘race.’”⁴⁷ One of the most damaging aspects of this “system of terror” is that the crimes occurred within the realm of what was supposed to

⁴⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁵ Miller, 88.

⁴⁶ These laws came to light during the Civil Rights Movement of the mid 1950s-1960s. In the South, drugstores had segregated lunch counters and it was illegal for a black person to sit at a whites only lunch counter.

⁴⁷ Judith Herman, conversation with Christina Robb, quoted in Robb, 76.

be a safe relationship, too frequently damaging a woman's ability to discern safe relationships in adulthood. Herman recognized that the politics of this system of terror contributed to the oppression of women, and began forming conscious-raising groups where she noted, among other things, the power imbalance between men and women and how deeply that imbalance was ingrained in our patriarchal culture. She observed that men's motivation was power (dominance) while women's motivation was love (relationship), and that "women's relations with men are often clouded by coercion and fear of coercion."⁴⁸ While the major part of her work focused on incest, her solution was to seek more democracy and end male supremacy in relationships. I doubt she anticipated the extent of the impact she would have in the political, social, and medical arenas.

These women eventually came together at Wellesley College to form the Stone Center for Research on Women, now known as the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute at the Wellesley Centers for Women. These women and the many who joined them in their work are responsible for the groundbreaking developmental theory leading to the call for connection, empathy, and mutuality in relationship.

Many women have nurtured, refined, and come to understand the importance of learning from and within relationships in a way that I believe men have been denied by virtue of their socialization. Contemporary socialization of men has, for years, been based on psychological theory developed from the study of boys absent the social context of

⁴⁸ Robb, 103.

girls. These theories created what Judith Jordan calls the “myth of the separate self” and led to “sociopolitical forces of disconnection that create significant pain for people.”⁴⁹

Sometimes referred to as “women’s ways of knowing,”⁵⁰ RCT is based on women’s experiences in context.⁵¹ The theorists at the Wellesley Centers for Women were convinced that connection is at the center of growth and that the standard principle of psychological separation is misleading and “defeating because the human condition is one of inevitable interdependence throughout the lifespan.”⁵² They hypothesized that their theory would “point to increasing levels of complexity and articulation within relationships with an increasing capacity for mutuality.”⁵³ Judith Jordan, the initiator of this model, argues that it strives to help both women and men find more support and affinity within the context of relationships. In relationships based on an understanding and implementation of RCT, people will be able to increase their authenticity, develop the ability for mutual empathy, and enjoy the benefits of mutual empowerment. Although RCT comes from a feminist perspective, it is also rooted in justice issues, which is best illustrated by the following stated value biases of RCT:

The belief that that capacity to build good connection is an essential human skill; the belief that it is valuable, even essential, for our global well-being that human beings develop relational skills and honor our basic need for connection; the belief that people have an *essential* need to

⁴⁹ Judith V. Jordan, *Relational-Cultural Therapy* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2009), 1-2.

⁵⁰ Mary Field Belenky et al., *Women’s Ways of Knowing* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

⁵¹ Every relational context imposes a set of cultural norms and expectations. I choose here to focus on the relational piece and leave the cultural aspect for another project.

⁵² Jordan, *Relational-Cultural Theory*, 3.

⁵³ Ibid.

connect with others; the belief that if these core yearnings for connection are supported by the larger context and people learn how to relate in growth-fostering ways with one another, people will experience an increasing sense of well-being at a personal and collective level.⁵⁴

Jordan acknowledges that many psychologies agree that if we “peel away the layers of socialization and civilization we find a selfish, aggressive and isolated individual...[driven primarily by] aggression, sexuality or hunger,” which she believes is at the core of the power/control mode.⁵⁵ She suggests that “the story of our preoccupation with self-sufficiency and autonomy is largely the story of our woundedness, the extent to which the cultural standards of development have warped our natural search for safe and growth-enhancing connection.”⁵⁶ This woundedness, this disconnection, this power/control mode, includes any divisive force along with, and perhaps especially, all of the *isms* that have fragmented our culture. RCT is an attempt to counteract the disconnection by increasing one’s capacity for relational resilience, mutual empathy, and mutual empowerment.⁵⁷

Jordan calls mutual empathy the core process of RCT. Empathy is a cognitive and affective process that is essential to the development of relational capacities. Mutual empathy involves the openness of all individuals in a relationship so that all individuals are affected by each other. This openness can come about only when old defenses or protective strategies are let go so that new growth can take place. When people are

⁵⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁵ Judith Jordan, “Relational Awareness: Transforming Disconnection,” *Work In Progress*, no. 76 (Wellesley, MA: Stone Centers Working Papers Series, 1995), 1.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁷ Jordan, *Relational-Cultural Theory*, 24.

encouraged to bring more of their authentic selves into relationships, they are better able to be present to themselves and to each other, they are more receptive to learning, and they are more capable of healing and growth.

Developing relational resilience is critical to this process. Relational resilience means the capability of re-establishing relationship once disconnection has occurred. It means moving back into that intimate and vulnerable place of connection and, if necessary, reaching out for help to do so. It calls for relationship skills that include healthy self-esteem, good boundaries, compassion, the willingness to forgive, and the ability to articulate the impact when injury occurs. These skills are crucial to the healing of people's woundedness that is inevitably necessary in building healthy community. Jordan suggests that this reaching out exhibits courage—the courage to overturn a common notion that strong people do not need help or do not experience fear or uncertainty. The ability to demonstrate this kind of courage leads to mutual empowerment and underlines the RCT emphasis on the importance of *encouraging* others.⁵⁸

Trinitarian theology, relational theology, and relational-cultural theory form what I believe is a substantial foundation for a new model of ministry, one that is more in keeping with what Jesus demonstrated and to which he called us during his brief time on earth. We can reframe the dualisms of clergy/laity and male/female, and challenge the disconnections brought about by gender differences, sexual orientation, race, and economic standing that have dominated for so long. I believe we will do this when we

⁵⁸ Ibid., 32.

concentrate on the things that Jesus tended to emphasize: relationship, inclusion, mutuality, and love. As religious and community leaders, this is how we can do what Jesus taught us to do.

TOCCUSA's ecclesiology based on the cornerstones of local authority, synodal governance, unity in diversity, and ecumenism is in harmony with Trinitarian-relational theology in that the church itself is structured on relational principles. Combining the ecclesiology and the theology of TOCCUSA creates the environment for a new model of ministry.

Chapter 4

A Trinitarian-Relational Model of Ministry: An Abundance of Relationships

A Theology of Ministry for TOCCUSA

How do we apply the history, theology and theory previously discussed and use them to create a paradigm for ministry? Ecclesiologically, Michael Crosby's book *Repair My House* provides a balanced, scripturally based foundation¹ for the kind of church I believe TOCCUSA wants to be. Ironically, his book is aimed at helping the Roman Catholic Church mend some of their hierarchical structural damage. Never-the-less it is valuable for a fledgling church such as TOCCUSA and is consistent with a relational theology and a communal, local church.

Crosby's thesis is based on passages from two chapters in Matthew's gospel — Matthew 16:13-20 and Matthew 18:15-20 — in which Jesus confers his authority. In the better known chapter sixteen, Jesus is with his chosen disciples and gives authority to Peter, an authority the church claims for its leadership (bishops). Jesus' discourse in chapter eighteen has to do with life and relationships within the church (*ekklēsia*²) and there the *same* authority is bestowed on church members: "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Crosby argues that "Rather than either/or, power and governance in the church should be

¹ Michael H. Crosby, *Repair My House: Becoming a "Kindom" Catholic* (New York: Orbis Books, 2012).

² Matthew is the only Gospel that mentions the word *ekklēsia*

a matter of both/and.”³ This is consistent with the theology and ecclesiology of TOCCUSA.⁴ The way we, as a church can be authentic and accountable to each other is for the clergy and the laity to be “co-responsible”⁵ for the life and ministry of the church.

This theology of co-responsible ministry goes beyond collaboration between clergy and laity. It calls lay persons to accept their God-given authority and empower themselves through Scripture, prayer, Eucharist and church life so that they can become more responsible for their faith education and answerable for the ministry of the church. After all, it was the disciples who said “Teach us to pray (Luke 11:1),” and the disciples who fed the multitudes after Jesus had prayed over the loaves and the fish (Matthew 14:13-21), and the disciples who unbound Lazarus when he was raised from the dead (John 11: 1-57). Jesus did not have to do it all! And neither should the clergy.

While this theology of ministry includes both clergy and laity, the focus of this paper remains on the clergy. The work of the clergy is to feed and nourish with Sacrament and Word, to model forgiveness, acceptance and inclusiveness, to practice justice and kindness, and to guide the education and ministry of the people of God. It is my contention that all of this is done most effectively within healthy relationships that include mutuality, respect, and empathy. But how does one achieve that? Andrew Root, in his new book *The Relational Pastor*⁶, says the key to creating this kind of ministry is

³ Crosby, p 30.

⁴ See page 78 in this chapter.

⁵ Crosby, p 38. While Crosby uses this term in his book, he attributes it to Pope Benedict XVI, “Lay People in the Church: From Collaboration to ‘Co-Responsibility,’ May 26, 2009. In *L’Osservatore Romano*, June 3, 2009.

⁶ Andrew Root, *The Relational Pastor: Sharing in Christ by Sharing Ourselves* (Dowser’s Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2013).

sharing. He argues that it is not about the responsibility for the *functions* of the church but the reality that we all have what he calls the “*vocation* of indwelling God and one another”⁷ and that by sharing ourselves with one another we become the incarnation of God for one another. I believe that relational ministry means creating the space where people can experience that indwelling of the Spirit in themselves and one another—where a community can be involved in personal encounter in the name of Christ and through the Holy Spirit that dwells in us. Root says we do this through our actions and our communications and by the recognition of our own embodied spirit and our own brokenness.⁸ I suggest we do it by serving one another and creating space for people to share their stories; by recognizing it is our spirit that connects us and our shared brokenness that bonds us.

From the long ago Creation when God said it was not good that humankind should be alone (Genesis 2:18) to the contemporary study of neurobiology and mirror neurons in our brains⁹, we can conclude that humankind was made for relationships. It is the best way to carry on the ministry of Christ.

Ideas to Examine, Actions to Take

What will a co-responsible ministry that exemplifies sharing and good relationships look like? The concepts already discussed focus on communication,

⁷ Ibid., 84. Emphasis is his.

⁸ Ibid., 76-89.

⁹ Christian Keysers, *The Empathic Brain: How the Discovery of Mirror Neurons Changes our Understanding of Human Nature* (Social Brain Press, 2011). This and other literature about mirror neurons describe the brain’s capacity to mirror people’s actions, sensations and emotions and through that sharing, enable people to create meaningful experiences.

mutuality, intimacy, and relationships. The overall concept is love, and we know what Jesus says about that: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27). In order to develop this model of ministry, one must develop strong relationship skills to engage with others.

In this ever-expanding world, if we do not know our neighbor, we are at a distinct disadvantage. Every church is meant to be a microcosm of the larger body of Christ in its unity and diversity, yet this is often not the reality. If we are not asking why it is not the reality, then we are not taking the gospel message to heart, and we are not looking critically at our complicity in the woundedness of this world. Our neighborhoods remain segregated, for the most part; our churches even more so. My home is in Maine, one of the whitest states in the country, where even people from other states are seen as “other.” Despite our state’s heavy dependence on tourism for survival, my neighbors speak of the summer season as the time when “they” are here. If that is the prevailing attitude, how does one demonstrate hospitality when a visitor walks into church for Sunday worship? Is the greeting false? Is it accurate when we sing “All Are Welcome?” What is our true voice, our honest self, really communicating?

In William M. Kondrath’s book *God’s Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences*, he states in the preface, “Personal conversion to embracing others and the communal transformation to becoming a radically welcoming and multicultural community begin with paying attention to our feelings and our behaviors as much as they

do with working out our ways of thinking or our theologies.”¹⁰ This means that in order to develop a healthy and gospel-driven practice of ministry, clergy must look first at their own behaviors, attitudes, and prejudices. If we are to build God’s kingdom, we need good tools. *We* are those tools, and it is our responsibility to ensure those tools are in good working order.

The concept illustrated in the “Overcoat Story” from chapter one can help. We might ask ourselves, “What overcoats are left over from our formative years that now bind us, denying us the freedom of both living in God’s kingdom and connecting with the entire body of Christ?” Let me suggest some clergy “hand-me-downs” from that patriarchal, hierarchical church: a need to control; speaking *over* or *to*, not *with* laity; a sense of entitlement or privilege; judgmental attitudes; poor relationships and intimacy skills; and unhealthy behaviors regarding diet, exercise, rest, and sleep. Such hand-me-downs would interfere with one’s ability to experience what Jean Baker Miller calls the five “good things” that are the gifts of good relationship: zest, power and effectiveness within the relationship, knowledge of self and of others, a sense of worth that comes from the attention and recognition of others, and a sense of greater connection and a desire for even more connection.¹¹

Once we begin the work of removing those restrictive overcoats (work that will most likely continue throughout our lives), and we learn how to love and minister to

¹⁰ William M. Kondrath, *God’s Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2008), xviii.

¹¹ Jean Baker Miller, “What Do We Mean by Relationships?” *Work in Progress*, no. 22 (Wellesley, MA: Jean Baker Miller Training Institute at the Wellesley Centers for Women, 1986), as referenced in Robb, *This Changes Everything*, 179-83.

ourselves, then we can begin to figure out how we can love and minister to others. As Sammy Davis, Jr. sang, “I can’t be right for somebody else if I’m not right for me.”¹²

Kondrath tells us that we all have internal multicultural dimensions that inform our own way of being in this world.¹³ In other words, our behaviors, our ways of thinking, and our feelings have been shaped by our own experiences, and they vary from person to person. It is not surprising that some of these differences result in conflict, both within and between individuals. Brita Gill-Austern addresses this conflict by suggesting a method of engaging the diversity found in oneself and others in order to move toward what she calls a “practice of practical solidarity.”¹⁴ This method has three stages: (1) self-examination, confession, and repentance; (2) constructive engagement with others; and (3) partnering with others. Similar to Gill-Austern, I propose the following three stages of formation for TOCCUSA clergy: (1) self-examination, (2) recognition of others, and (3) ministry to all. I am hopeful that, when implemented within the framework of Trinitarian-relational theology and synodal ecclesiology as practiced by TOCCUSA,¹⁵ these practices will lead to relationships that mimic the great embracing dance of God.

Self-examination

The lesson of the “Overcoat Story” is that our past histories (family, psycho-social, emotional) shape our current social location; it is up to us to know and understand how. We must identify and acknowledge the impact of our histories in order to exercise

¹² “I’ve Gotta Be Me.” Sung by Sammy Davis, Jr. Original title, “I’ve Got to Be Me,” music and lyrics by Walter Marks, 1967.

¹³ Kondrath, xix.

¹⁴ Brita L. Gill-Austern, “Engaging Diversity and Differences: From Practice of Exclusion to Practices of Practical Solidarity” in *Injustice and the Care of Souls: Taking Oppression Seriously in Pastoral Care*, ed. Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook and Karen B. Montagno (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 29-44.

¹⁵ See chapters two and three.

healthy choices, develop healthy behaviors, and foster healthy connections in our current experiences. The poet Mark Nepo puts it in another way:

Each of us is like a great, untamed sea, obedient to deeper currents that are seldom visible....It is our deep-sounding, untamed currents that cause us to rise and swell, dip and crash. Yet that base of spirit remains unaffected by the storms that churn up the surface. It obeys a deeper order. Still, we as beings living in the world are always subject to both: the depth and the surface, our spirit and our psychology. Though we can never see all the way to bottom, on clear days—when our psychology is calm—we can know the depth that carries us. When free of turbulence and anxiety, we can know the ocean of God that swells within....

The degree to which we are clear and seeable depends on how calm we are and how calm the day. But we are never cut off from our spirit, any more than the surface wave is cut off from the ocean floor. Fear of living often comes when we place all our energy into the moment of the wave, into the turbulent moment of our psychology.¹⁶

Regardless of when or how any harm was done to us, it is our responsibility as adults to make sure we do not allow those events to enable us to harm others. A therapist once told me that “hurt people, hurt people”—people who are hurt by others will hurt other people, or, in other words, what you have received is what you will pass on. I believe that without serious and in-depth self-examination, that is almost inevitable. Doing this very personal and interior work gives us what Rita Nakashima Brock calls

¹⁶ Mark Nepo, *The Book of Awakening* (San Francisco: Conari Press, 1990), 199-200.

“interstitial integrity,” which is the integration of many diverse parts of ourselves. She defines integrity as “how we know ourselves and how we make choices that sustain our values in relationship with others.”¹⁷ This journey is crucial to our ministerial formation and allows us to recognize the cultures, experiences, and learning that make us who we are. With forty years of clinical experience, I solidly support Brock’s assertion that “we do not choose the others who live in us, but nonetheless, they are how we become who we are.”¹⁸ It is better to know the origins and machinations of those currents that “cause us to rise and swell, dip and crash,” as Nepo says. It is the only way to learn to navigate the waters of life. This self-examination might begin with recognizing our own sense of power and privilege with regard to age, race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, class, or abilities. How have our life circumstances infused meaning into these categories? How have these categories created differences in people? What are our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors about these differences within ourselves? How does this self-examination inform us about our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward others?

My purpose here is not to engage in psychotherapy, but merely to draw attention to some of the pitfalls we might encounter as we engage in the transformation essential to our call to ministry. A clergyperson who has not yet ventured into an honest self-examination might want to consider entering into a professional relationship with a psychotherapist, a spiritual director, or someone else trained to help navigate these waters. No one I know has ever regretted taking that journey. It is almost impossible to

¹⁷ Rita Nakashima Brock, “Cooking Without Recipes: Interstitial Integrity,” in *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Theology*, ed. Rita Nakashima Brock, Jung Ha Kim, Kwok Pui-lan, and Seung Ai Yang (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 126.

¹⁸ Ibid., 136.

do it alone. As Gill-Austern says, our internal systems “make us believe lies about ourselves and others.”¹⁹ One of the biggest lies we too often believe is that we are independent beings.

Recognition of Others

The question “Who is my neighbor?” is thankfully being addressed in homilies, retreats, workshops, curricula, and thoughtful self-scrutiny. The informed Christian now knows that everyone is his or her neighbor. But what does that Christian know of his or her neighbor’s pain and struggle? I once heard a story of an old rabbi who was teaching a class. He asked his students, “At what point does night become day?” One student offered, “When you can see the outline of a tree on the hill.” “No,” said the rabbi, “that’s not it.” Another student suggested it might be when one could distinguish if the tree was an oak or a maple tree. Again the rabbi shook his head. When the students had exhausted their suggestions, the rabbi finally told them, “Night becomes day when you can see the pain in your neighbor’s eyes.” What do we know of the pain in our neighbors’ eyes? What are their struggles? Through what hardships have they already come? How can we minister to God’s people without knowing the answers to these questions? How can we minister to God’s people without knowing where or how they suffer?

The people who fill churches come from different cultures, different social locations, and have different abilities. It is incumbent upon clergy to understand, to the greatest extent possible, the communities they serve. This calls for healthy, intimate relationships between clergy and laity. Intimacy in this context does *not* include sexual

¹⁹ Gill-Austern, 37.

intimacy. Rather it is about the kind of intimacy that God has within the Trinity and that God wants to share with us. This intimacy is what Marcella Althaus-Reid calls a metaphor of “mutuality, pleasurable activity and freedom,” and it calls us to transformation.²⁰

In addition to understanding their own faith communities, clergy must also understand the larger communities in which they live, and, to an extent, the whole world community. The overwhelming testimony of scripture tells us that the church is meant to be a multicultural, multilingual, and multi-ethnic gathering of God’s people. A culturally competent individual engaged in healthy, caring relationships will be able to identify the differences between people and understand the dynamics brought about by those differences. If those dynamics suggest any form of oppression or exclusion, they must be addressed, for justice demands it. As difficult as it may be to acknowledge that oppression exists, it is essential that we do so. Only then will we begin to understand our own internalized negative beliefs, prejudices, and stereotypes—the “overcoats” left over from our formative years. It is our responsibility to acknowledge and take off those overcoats, for while they can protect us from being hurt by others, they can also blind us to the pain of others.

When considering our differences, one must always look at them in the context of power and privilege to understand the advantages or disadvantages those differences bring.²¹ Kondrath defines *power* as “the ability to do or to be” and *privilege* as “the

²⁰ Marcella Althaus-Reid, “Queer I Stand: Lifting the Skirts of God,” in *The Sexual Theologian: Essays on Sex, God and Politics*, ed. Marcella Althaus-Reid and Lisa Isherwood (New York: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 100.

²¹ For a more complete discussion of power and privilege, see chapter two in Kondrath’s *God’s Tapestry*.

benefits conferred to members of a dominant group simply by virtue of their membership in that group.”²² Not everyone enjoys power and/or privilege. Even someone who has power and privilege in one aspect of his or her life may not experience it in all aspects or in all contexts. I agree with Marsha Wiggins and Carmen Williams, who point out that “understanding the concept of ‘privilege’ is critical if compassionate, committed pastoral caregivers are to be successful in expanding the notions of their work beyond responses to individual need to the larger, global issue of oppression.”²³ As examples, I will focus on four areas of oppression that demand our attention.

Racism

Despite all the gains that have been made in this country around issues of race, we know that prejudice and active discrimination continue to harm the lives of people of color today.²⁴ Tema Okun, who participated in the Dismantling Racism Project of the Western States’ RACE (Research and Action for Change and Equity) Program, has gone as far as compiling a list of characteristics of a white supremacy culture in this country which, exercised unconsciously, “make it difficult if not impossible, to open the door to other cultural norms and standards.”²⁵ Having people of color in your congregation does not make you culturally competent. The white clergyperson must make the effort to familiarize herself with the different cultures with which she has contact. More than that,

²² Ibid., 34.

²³ Marsha I. Wiggins and Carmen Braun Williams, “Pastoral Care with African American Women: Womanist Perspectives and Strategies,” in *Injustice and the Care of Souls*, 50.

²⁴ For a sobering and even frightening look at active and systemic racial discrimination today, see Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2012).

²⁵ Tema Okun, “White Supremacy Culture,” compiled for **changework** from *Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups*. (Portland, OR: Western States Center, 2003), accessed Nov. 14, 2013, <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/tools-and-resources/Tools/Dismantling%20Racism>.

she must also recognize her own position of power and privilege and the dynamic that it creates vis-à-vis parishioners who have long been victims of systematic oppression. To not recognize and acknowledge one's own power and privilege is to engage in the oppression we hope to erase.²⁶ In addition, the white clergyperson must make room for the inclusion of spirituality from other cultures. For example, African American spirituality, according to Wiggins and Williams, is characterized by two main themes: "the pursuit of liberation from injustice and the belief that the spiritual is present in every aspect of life."²⁷ A clergyperson could easily focus on that in a liturgy and highlight it as an integral part of African American culture. To work for justice alongside African Americans, the clergyperson must engage in strategies that will help develop a "heightened and deepened sense of empathy that results in a commitment to personal and social change for all those involved in the endeavor."²⁸

Sexism

On June 28, 2013, at a *Mobilizing Faith for Women* event hosted by the human rights activist and former President Jimmy Carter, Carter addressed a gathering of representatives from fifteen different countries about the plight of women in the world. A reporter for the Associated Press summarized the former president's speech, writing, Carter says religious leaders, including those in Christianity and Islam, share the blame for mistreatment of women across the world....Religious authorities perpetuate misguided doctrines of male superiority...and [those] doctrines

²⁶ Wiggins and Williams, 52.

²⁷ Ibid., 49.

²⁸ Ibid., 56.

contribute to a political, social and economic structure where political leaders passively accept violence against women, a worldwide sex slave trade and inequality in the workplace and classroom.²⁹

In Carter's own words, "There is a great aversion among men leaders and some women leaders to admit that this is something that exists, that it's serious and that it's troubling and should be addressed courageously."³⁰

So how must we, who purport to be building God's kingdom here on earth, courageously respond? Lisa Isherwood, who exhorts women to accept that their bodies are part of their politics, asks, "How do we grasp liberation, mutuality, and our divine essence from the many layered oppressions that are as intimate to us as our own thoughts?"³¹ As worn as it may be, I believe in the adage "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." Since we are all a part of this culture, we are responsible for actively working to undo sexism; any inaction on our part only worsens the problem. And by "we," I mean men *and* women—the responsibility does not rest with men alone. As Mary Daly says, women must also be "jolted out of complacency."³² Yes, women may be angered by the many years of oppression they and their sisters have experienced, but that anger must be used as fuel to "continually resist and refuse the

²⁹ "Carter: Religions Share in Oppression of Women," *Portland Press Herald*, June 29, 2013, Religion & Values Section.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Lisa Isherwood, "Sex and Body Politics: Issues for Feminist Theology," in *The Good News of the Body*, ed. Lisa Isherwood (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 30.

³² Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), xii.

snares of patriarchy without confusing this with the humanity of males.”³³ Just as we insist on affirming the full humanity of females, so must we affirm “the humanity of males behind the mask of patriarchy.”³⁴ Keeping in mind the aforementioned intimacy to which God calls us in our relationships, we must encourage women to actively engage in a response to patriarchy and see that response as part of a process of transforming the way men and women interact. Women working *with* men on this issue will more effectively loosen the hold of patriarchy that still exists in some of our churches. To quote Isherwood, “Incarnation demands more engagement.”³⁵

Heterosexism

Several years ago I had a meeting with the Roman Catholic bishop of Portland, Maine. When I asked him to advocate ending homophobic behaviors in the Roman Catholic Church, he replied, “Oh, that doesn’t really happen anymore.”³⁶ As recently as July 4, 2013, a post by Brody Levesque on LGBTQNATION.com reminded us that heterosexism remains a virulent problem in the church. The post reported that Roman Catholic Cardinal Nicolás de Jesús López Rodríguez of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, referred to James “Wally” Brewster, the gay American ambassador nominee to the Dominican Republic, as a “faggot.” At the same press conference, Monsignor Paul Cedano said, “Brewster would experience such an unpleasant stay in the Dominican

³³ Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Women-Church: Theology & Practice* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 60.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Isherwood, 32.

³⁶ Bishop Joseph Gerry, conversation with author, Portland, ME, October, 1996.

Republic that he will have to return home.”³⁷ Clearly, the bishop of Portland was wrong: homophobia definitely still “happens” in the church. Brewster had no religious agenda and was not being sent as an activist for the gay community, yet the church chose to publically vilify him. To what end? They were merely promoting their own brand of prejudice: one that highlights their hypocrisy, given the recently revealed “gay lobby” at the Vatican.³⁸ More recently, Pope Francis responded to the homosexuality question and said, “Who am I to judge?”³⁹ Many were overjoyed at these remarks. But the following day, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, then the highest-ranking Roman Catholic in the United States, denied that the church was changing its steadfast opposition to homosexuality. It seems they are changing their tone, not their policy.

I have come to agree with Daniel Maguire who argues that heterosexism, not homosexuality, is the problem.⁴⁰ Focusing on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning people as the problem is, as Maguire tells us, “a distraction and a surrender to the unjust and poisonous prejudice of heterosexism.”⁴¹ While the above examples are from the Roman Catholic Church, other churches are equally guilty. Anyone who reads the newspapers is aware of the hate that the Westboro Baptist Church promotes with their demonstrations at the funerals of fallen soldiers. One can find their schedule of

³⁷ Brody Levesque, “Catholic Cardinal Refers to Gay U.S. Ambassador Nominee as ‘Faggot’,” LBGTQNATION, accessed July 4, 2013, www.lbgtqnation.com

³⁸ Tom Kington, “Pope’s ‘Gay Lobby’ Remarks Stir up New Storm of Vatican Gossip,” *The Guardian*, June 30, 2013, accessed July 4, 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/30/pope-gay-lobby-vatican-gossip>.

³⁹ Stacy Miechtry, “Pope Signals Openness to Gay Priests,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 30, 2013, accessed August 1, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324354704578635401320888608.html>.

⁴⁰ Daniel C. Maguire, “Heterosexism, Not Homosexuality, Is the Problem,” in *Heterosexism in Contemporary World Religion*, ed. Marvin Ellison and Judith Plaskow (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2007), 1-11.

⁴¹ Ibid., 1.

demonstrations on their website, GodHatesFags.com. Marvin Ellison, an ethicist and ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church, tells us that Protestant Christianity “has fostered injustice and caused serious harm because its ethic of relational intimacy has been constructed on the basis of heterosexual exclusivism, the assumption that the only acceptable sexuality is heterosexual, marital and procreative.”⁴²

Thanks to the women’s and gay liberation movements of the past few decades, many churches are re-examining their theologies and practices regarding human sexuality. In Patrick Cheng’s book *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology*, Cheng presents a genealogy of queer theology and, using the ecumenical creeds as a framework, creates a new lens through which we can explore the “radical love” of God.⁴³

A growing number of states now allow same-sex marriage. Along with the fall of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 2013, which allows same-sex couples to benefit from the more than 1,300 federal rights they were previously denied, even the federal government is acting to equalize human rights for all. I suggest every church, every member of the living body of Christ do likewise.

Ableism

Carolyn Thompson defines *ableism* as “a subtle and pervasive bias that assumes nondisabled people (people with no physical, sensory, or mental impairments) are

⁴² Marvin Ellison, “Beyond Same-Sex Marriage: Continuing the Reformation of Protestant Christianity” in *Heterosexism in Contemporary World Religion*, 37.

⁴³ Patrick S. Cheng, *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* (New York: Seabury Books, 2011). Other books are also exploring the field of queer theology. For example, Gerard Loughlin, ed., *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007); Gary David Comstock, *Gay Theology Without Apology* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2009); and Patrick S. Cheng, *Rainbow Theology: Bridging Race, Sexuality and Spirit* (New York: Seabury Books, 2013).

‘normal’ and that people with disabilities represent an undesirable deviation from this norm.”⁴⁴ I agree with Thompson’s view that the disabled person is often defined by his or her appearance, impairments, or limitations, and that this prejudicial measure may be used to determine the individual’s acceptability and worth. For this reason I would like to also include persons with addictions as part of this group.

Thompson uses Iris Marion Young’s concept of “Five Faces of Oppression”⁴⁵ to demonstrate ways in which people with disabilities experience oppression. This paradigm contends that “oppression is characterized by cultural imperialism, marginalization, powerlessness, exploitation and violence.”⁴⁶ Thompson provides examples of how that oppression might be felt. She writes that an example of cultural imperialism might be that persons with disabilities are much less likely to see people like themselves on TV, in the news, or in movies. They might experience powerlessness by having to wait inordinately long times to get services for which they qualify and to which they are entitled. They may be exploited by being given only menial tasks or being underemployed.

Elizabeth Stuart has created a theology of disability that has as its starting point the concept that there is “no place where God is not.”⁴⁷ Based on this concept, she invites us into a theology where one seeks not to be freed from the disabled body,⁴⁸ but rather to embrace it as central to the theology itself. Stuart is courageous enough to stretch the

⁴⁴ Carolyn Thompson, “Ableism: The Face of Oppression as Experienced by People with Disabilities” in *Injustice and the Care of Souls*, 211.

⁴⁵ See Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

⁴⁶ Thompson, 212.

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Stuart, “Disruptive Bodies: Disability, Embodiment and Sexuality,” in *The Good News of the Body*, 168

⁴⁸ For example, see Nancy L. Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberation Theology of Disability* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994).

construct of God to include an image of a disabled God so that *all* people can identify as being created in the image of God. Willing to look at God as disabled, she points out that “throughout the Gospels those with physical impairments are portrayed as at least open to, at best audaciously seeking, this presence [of God]—in direct contrast to the able bodies who consistently fail to grasp what is going on.”⁴⁹ She goes on to exhort us to recognize that “the body of Christ needs to break itself open to make room at its heart for the disabled body.”⁵⁰

All institutionalized churches, including ours, bear what Eugene Kennedy calls an “unhealed wound.”⁵¹ While his comment is particularly aimed at the church’s attitudes to human sexuality, it may also apply to any prejudice, attitude, or response that keeps justice from “flowing like a river,” washing us all clean. Kennedy contends that the church has an “institutional impulse to keep that wound from healing”⁵² in order to maintain control over human beings. We must, with all the grace God bestows upon us as spiritual leaders, resist that impulse. Our voices must cry out for the justice every child of God deserves, no matter the circumstance he or she embodies.

Ministry to All

If we are to minister to all in the image of God, then our practice will have be Trinitarian in nature. It will be relational, mutual, intimate, and self-giving.⁵³ Like Jesus, our mission is to proclaim the good news that the realm of God is at hand. A familiar yet

⁴⁹ Stuart, 171.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 176.

⁵¹ Eugene Kennedy, *The Unhealed Wound: The Church and Human Sexuality* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2001).

⁵² Ibid., 81.

⁵³ Stephen Seamands, *Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian Service* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Books, 2005).

undocumented quote, attributed to Francis of Assisi is that we must “preach the Gospel always and, when necessary, use words.” It is up to us to ensure that we have a voice that can be heard by all of God’s children.

I must state clearly that my goal is not to present a how-to manual or suggest a new set of techniques. My goal is to present a model of ministry for TOCCUSA clergy—a model that will change attitudes about ministry and the understanding of how ministry can be practiced. Inspired by RCT, it is intended to bring insights and understandings about how people relate to one another. Recounting the events and spread of the relational revolution in psychology that took place in the 1970s, Christina Robb notes (in her book of the same title), “This changes everything.”⁵⁴ And indeed it has. The growth of relational psychology has motivated us to look at not only who we are, but also how we are with one another. Robb says, “Relationships do not grow in a vacuum but through experiencing the whole of life together....Human politics will not grow from people who fear honest human relationships but through ones who are willing to share their total selves.”⁵⁵ I believe this is what Jesus modeled for us while he was here on earth.

It is not a surprise that relational theology is also enjoying resurgence. Writers are exploring how we experience God in and through our relationships with ourselves and others and the cosmos. The God of scripture is most definitely a God of relationship. How do we emulate that God? How aware are we of our own interrelatedness? How do we relate to others? How does “being as communion” influence our ministries? How does it influence our congregations? How can it influence the world? The search for these

⁵⁴ Robb, *This Changes Everything*.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 131.

answers must take place on an individual level, in small groups, and in our larger faith communities. The answers will be found in our liturgies and in our social actions. How we are able to embrace and relate to one another and to the world in this wonderful and amazing and constantly changing dance of life and freedom inspired by a Triune God will make all the difference.

Ministry to the Self

The entire emphasis of this chapter is on the importance of relationships in our ministry. To include a section on the self might seem incongruous. The intention here is not to focus on the self as independent; rather it is to call attention to the self as an individual—an individual who is a part of the whole of creation and who carries responsibility for his or her part in it.

It is difficult to have a voice for proclaiming the good news when we are tired, burned out, or stressed. To be authentic in our ministries, self-care is essential. Not narcissistic self-care, as in the pursuit of pleasure or self-indulgence, but rather what Roy Oswald calls “self-care for the sake of others.”⁵⁶ His theology of self-care includes some deep soul searching as well as the re-evaluation and re-assessment of our call to ministry, what the body needs to remain healthy and vital, the examples of self-care Jesus demonstrated during his ministry such as retreat and prayer, and even our own brokenness. When we truly understand the tensions we live with, the impact they have on us, and the things in our lives that are life-giving and restorative, we must seek balance between them. To assist with finding that balance, Oswald offers suggestions for finding

⁵⁶ Roy M. Oswald, *Clergy Self-Care: Finding a Balance for Effective Ministry* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1991), 6.

spiritually uplifting practices and techniques to reduce stress, such as developing support systems, exercising, practicing good nutrition, improving time-management skills, seeking spiritual direction, and engaging in psychotherapy. In the process, he suggests that we ask ourselves how it is that we embody God. These practices help us toward our own optimal individual health so we are fit for healthy relationships. Only then can we bring a healthy self to our work.

Ministry in a Group

The first course I took at Episcopal Divinity School was called Foundations for Theological Praxis. This course set the tone and criteria for an educational practice that commits itself to providing an anti-racist, multicultural theological experience that embraces diversity. The framework of the course is based on a program developed by VISIONS, Inc.⁵⁷ The goal of the course was to teach guidelines that enable us to break out of ingrained prejudices and biases and be open to new perspectives in a safe and caring manner. The work of the course entailed taking an experiential look at our own social location using the classroom group for context and support. Through exercises, journaling, reading, and sharing, it became apparent just how deeply our own social locations influence what we think about ourselves and others. In the end, participants gained a whole new vocabulary with which to preach the good news. While the scope of this paper does not allow me to go into detail, the following guidelines for VISIONS

⁵⁷ Vigorous InterventionS In Ongoing Natural Settings (VISIONS) is an organization specializing in diversity and inclusion that offers training and consultation for corporations, nonprofit agencies, schools, churches, and the public sector. Its website can be accessed at www.visions-inc.org.

work are adhered to whenever any VISIONS training takes place. They are highly recommended as personal, daily exercises:

1. Try on.
2. It's okay to disagree. It's not okay to shame, blame, or attack oneself or others.
3. Practice self-focus.
4. Practice "both/and" thinking.
5. Be aware of intent and impact.
6. Take 100 percent responsibility for one's own learning.
7. Maintain confidentiality.
8. It's okay to be messy
9. Say ouch.⁵⁸

When a group can agree upon these guidelines at the outset, the individuals will be more likely to experience a safe place and will be encouraged to explore new ways of thinking and being in relationships that honor diversity. Training like this raises our awareness of events and people that have molded us and calls our attention to how we might influence others. Involving our congregations in training workshops like these can be invitations to furthering God's kingdom.

Ministry in Our Worship

Is liturgy always the same when we worship? What is it that keeps bringing people back? What are the things that get our attention in a particularly uplifting liturgy? Is the congregation participating fully in the worship experience? Do rituals and liturgy help the congregation connect with the world around them? These questions are crucial for congregational leaders in order to maintain vibrant worship.

Additionally, it is important to remember that all the individuals who walk in our doors bring with them their own history, culture, experience, and woundedness. Is what

⁵⁸ Kondrath, 1-32.

we have to offer relevant to them? Will what we have to share address their woundedness and help them to heal? I believe we need to know how to inspire everyone present in our worship services to full participation so that they move toward mutual ownership of the rituals. When a congregation is fully present and engaged in the worship and rituals, they are more likely to experience God's grace available through that liturgy.

Offering various forms of worship may be one way to keep a faith community from becoming stagnant or uninteresting; creating opportunities to recognize life events and passages with prayer and ritual may be another. Retreats, meetings, conferences, and even social events that begin with prayer can help bring congregations together to increase relationship and mutuality.

Worship opportunities with other local faith communities should also be sought. As mentioned in chapter two, ecumenical outreach is a hallmark of Old Catholicism. A critically important resource for TOCCUSA clergy is Mattijs Ploeger's book *Celebrating Church: Ecumenical Contributions to a Liturgical Ecclesiology*.⁵⁹ In it, Ploeger presents liturgical contributions from a number of Old Catholic theologians as well as theologians from the Orthodox, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Protestant churches. Werner Küppers, an Old Catholic theologian whose work is highlighted in Ploeger's book, says that "the eucharist unites the individual believer not only with Christ, but also with his or her fellow Christians."⁶⁰ While this fact is not unique to TOCCUSA or the OCC, it needs to be continually articulated and emphatically stressed.

⁵⁹ Mattijs Ploeger, *Celebrating Church: Ecumenical Contributions to a Liturgical Ecclesiology* (Tilburg, the Netherlands: Instituut voor Liturgiewetenschap, 2008).

⁶⁰ Ibid., 199.

Ploeger also writes about the work of Jan Visser, who says that the Old Catholic tradition in its fullest sense must be connected to contemporary thought and culture “in such a way that it can be experienced as relevant by contemporary people.”⁶¹ If we cannot make church relevant in today’s world, we have no right being in the church business.

Ministry in Our World

Does every TOCCUSA faith community have a mission statement? Does the mission statement focus on the civic community in which it exists? How is what happens in church on a Sunday morning evident outside of the worship space during the rest of the week? Doug Gay tells us that “the inner circle (word and sacrament) belongs to the Church’s identity across time, while the outer circle marks the Church’s faithful witness to God in a particular time and place.”⁶²

The experience of church is changing. We are coming into a period of what Phyllis Tickle calls “The Great Emergence,”⁶³ a time of transition which, she claims, occurs every five hundred years or so. She says we are “moving from an era of confessionalization to an era of collaboration...moving toward one another working to repair and re-network a relationship strand that had previously been severed...moving from one of competition and distinction to one of mutuality and collaboration.”⁶⁴ If this is the work of God’s Spirit, then how, as a church, are we involved? Are we bringing

⁶¹ Ibid., 208.

⁶² Doug Gay, *Remixing the Church: Towards and Emerging Ecclesiology* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 119.

⁶³ Phyllis Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 215-16.

ourselves out of our comfortable sanctuaries into the *Missio Dei*? Church is no longer confined to any building. It takes place in the marketplace, schools, and prisons; at our dinner tables; in big business; and even on the Internet. It seems the only limit on our global reach is the one imposed by our own lack of imagination. Where can our imagination take the church?

Harvey Cox writes about the future of faith and the direction in which this great upheaval, or emergence, is leading. He claims,

The Church of the twenty-first century has begun to look more like that of the first two centuries, when streams of women, slaves and impoverished city dwellers joined the new congregations. The original idea of Christianity as a faithful way of life has begun to displace the enforced system of creeds that defined it during much of the intervening time.⁶⁵

This is the message of TOCCUSA that we proclaim: Ancient Faith, Welcoming and Inclusive Church, Serving the Modern World.⁶⁶ We must develop the ways, in word and deed, to express it, which are at once intelligible, compelling, relevant, and theologically grounded.

Education

Education is something of exceptional significance for TOCCUSA. There are three reasons for its importance. First and most obvious, Old Catholicism is relatively unknown in the United States. Only those with specific theological interest are likely to

⁶⁵ Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 195.

⁶⁶ This is found on the TOCCUSA logo.

encounter the Old Catholic Church. The average layperson is unaware of this expression of Catholicism that is increasingly available. With no accredited Old Catholic seminary in the United States, TOCCUSA is responsible for accumulating a body of knowledge as well as the praxis to provide leadership in our church and build up the body of Christ in Old Catholic ways.

Second, this modern world we serve is one that has seen increasing access to information that both informs and educates. It is easy to be influenced by the secularism, consumerism, and other non-theological sources that have taken the place of a family-driven transmission of religious and spiritual practices. In addition, we are a first-generation church—if we are to survive, we must be the ones to pass the theology and traditions we cherish on to the next generation.

Third, it is not enough to have clergy who are charismatic, compassionate, and comforting. While the ability to enter into healthy relationships has clearly been the primary focus of this chapter, we cannot encourage style over substance. TOCCUSA must not give in to the secular pull of our culture and become another do-good social institution. If we are to survive as a church, our existence must demonstrate the “theological occasion for the communication of the gospel of Jesus Christ”⁶⁷ in our words and in our actions. This requires a sound theological education.

Education of the Clergy

In order to ensure that clergy members have a theologically substantive education, candidates should possess a minimum of a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree. I say this

⁶⁷ Wallace M. Alston, Jr. “The Education of a Pastor-Theologian,” in *The Power to Comprehend with All The Saints*, ed. Wallace M. Alston, Jr. and Cynthia A. Jarvis (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 66.

because the time and commitment it takes to earn a master's degree, along with the collegial relationships that are developed while pursuing one, become part of the formation of a spiritual leader. Wallace Alston, former director of the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton, has suggested some of the important tasks of theological education.⁶⁸ I have adapted some of his tasks along with goals for M.Div. students at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts⁶⁹ and added to them for the purpose of addressing the needs of TOCCUSA:

First, enable seminarians to think theologically and be able to articulate those thoughts in order to facilitate faith by handing on the story of God's salvific work in this world. The well-prepared priest or deacon will teach the Bible, not teach *about* the Bible. He or she will be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of Christian texts, church history, liturgy, ethics, pastoral care, and contemporary society.

Second, foster a command of Old Catholic theology. While familiarity with a variety of theologies might be helpful, it is essential that what gets taught and lived out is not only one's subjective or individualistic understanding of Old Catholicism, but the ancient faith as it is presented in the creeds, in scripture, and in tradition. The task of the clergy is to faithfully interpret these in contemporary language for discernment in the present world.

Third, endow seminarians with the skills to preach, teach, and provide pastoral care so that they may share their theological understanding. They will come to understand their own lives and the world around them with the perspective of scripture and church

⁶⁸ Ibid., 75-76.

⁶⁹ Goals for MDiv and MATS Programs, provided by Dr. Kwok Pui-lan.

teachings so they can respond to their congregation and the world around them in a more relevant manner. They will be familiar with the issues that are included in such categories as race, class, gender, sexuality and ability and be able to address them with modern sensibilities and in a Christ-like manner. So equipped, the ministries developed by the people of TOCCUSA will be a true representation of Old Catholicism in the modern world.

Fourth, convey the sacramental theology of TOCCUSA and train seminarians in liturgical practices. TOCCUSA clergy are free to adapt liturgies for relevance in their local communities. For this reason, it is important to comprehend the theological and fundamental essentials of what we do and how we do it.

Education of the Laity

As already stated in chapter one, one of the roles of clergy is to facilitate the development of theological thinking in the laity. Educating the laity is of utmost importance. As mentioned in the introduction, the laity historically was told that its role was to be led by the ministers. Disempowered, they became increasingly passive, believing what Rowthorn calls the “myth propagated by seventeen hundred years of clericalization: that laity *go* to church, but clergy *are* the church.”⁷⁰ This is both a shame and a scandal, as Rowthorn goes on to say: “The shame is that the laity have believed these myths; the scandal is that the clergy has not corrected them. The scandal is that the

⁷⁰ Rowthorn, 8.

clergy have failed to teach the laity that they are, in every way, just as much the Church as any ordained minister.”⁷¹

Too many Roman Catholics do not know the overarching story of the Bible – the story of a loving God who created all that is good, who made a promise to first, one man (Abraham), and then a whole people (the Israelites), and the lengths to which God has gone to keep that promise. The promise that God is our God and we are God’s people is repeated and demonstrated throughout Scripture. At Mass, small sections of Scripture are delivered, often without explanation, history or context. Many in the congregation never take the opportunity to get the bigger picture, to understand what the story of salvation really means for them. Since Vatican II many have begun to seek answers and information in earnest, wanting to empower themselves once again by means of education. We must be prepared for the questions they bring. A solid foundational education in scripture, systematic theology, ecclesiology, pastoral ethics, and preaching will equip us to do just that.

Competent TOCCUSA clergy will demonstrate the ability not only to engage in healthy Trinitarian-based mutual relationships, but also to represent the church with a firm foundation of theological knowledge and capable liturgical skills. They will know the dynamics of power so as to never abuse it. They will be aware of who is not included and reach out to them. They will be able to acknowledge and address the differences that keep people isolated and work to mend them. They will engage in ecumenical relations, working always toward the unity of God’s people.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Clergy will not be sacramental machines, handing out Eucharist and penances, but broken people who have joined God in their own healing and can model that for others, offering restoration and forgiveness to all who seek it. The priest or deacon who leads this pilgrim church will be able to teach the laity how to embrace their own baptismal call to work side by side with the ordained ministers to continue the mission of Christ. Together they can engage in repenting, reforming, and transforming, sharing the good news of God's kingdom, and allowing Jesus, who calls every one of us, to form us in his image. That clergy member will open his or her arms to the world and say, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

Chapter 5

Implementation and Implications for the Future

A new model is only as successful as its ability to be implemented and handed down to the next generation. I have no doubt that members of TOCCUSA, both ordained and lay, are trying to practice good relationships. What I am not sure about is their understanding of the theoretical foundations of their work. I worked as a bachelor-level social worker for seven years before returning to school for a master's degree in social work. I found that as I learned foundational theory, I had many "Aha!" moments—moments when I realized why much of what I was doing intuitively in the field was successful. It is the combination of modeling behavior and teaching the underlying theory that has the potential for birthing a new model of ordained ministry. I hope that this combination of modeling and teaching will develop confidence and competence in those who experience this training and education, enabling them to pass this new approach to ministry on and ensure the continuation of a TOCCUSA model of ministry.

Implementation of a Trinitarian-Relational Model

Because of the synodal form of governance practiced by TOCCUSA, the first step in the implementation of the model is for both the House of Bishops and the House of Delegates to review it. Once approved by those two houses, it will be placed on the agenda for TOCCUSA's October 2014 National Assembly for official endorsement.

It is not within the scope of this paper to present an entire syllabus for teaching this model. It is, however, important to give some thought to a plan to develop ways in

which this information should be disseminated. Both training and education are necessary. Training will be sponsored by the Institute of Old Catholic Studies (IOCS) and will begin with a three- to four-day workshop held at a time and in a location to be announced. The workshop will be structured according to the VISIONS principles and guidelines for healthy relationships that were mentioned in chapter four. Clergy will be selected to attend this workshop based on their desire and commitment to learn TOCCUSA's new model as well as their ability to teach it in their dioceses.

During the workshop, attendees will be asked to apply the VISIONS guidelines and principles as they engage in their ministry. Selected readings will be assigned, and a schedule for follow-up conference call discussions will be disseminated at the workshop as well. The reading list will be taken in part from the bibliography of this thesis and will be supplemented with readings on supervision and leadership. The conference call schedule will include at least six pre-arranged dates and will span at least six months. As dean of the IOCS and author of this model, I plan to participate in those conference call discussions and serve as a consultant to the students.

Ideally, a final retreat for all trainees will take place at the end of six months in order to practice some of the main principles learned and to discuss the further use of the Trinitarian-relational model for ministry.

Once the training and education program has been completed, the goal is to have at least one person in each diocese familiar enough with this model and its principles to teach it. Each diocese will then be asked to formalize a program for teaching Trinitarian-relational ministry to their local clergy, to those individuals who aspire to ordination and

to those who seek transfer into the Old Catholic Church from other denominations . My plan is to assist each diocese with the development of such a program. The IOCS will remain a consultative resource for those involved in the local training and education. I hope that the material in this thesis will be utilized as a foundational piece of that teaching.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the best possible foundation for someone called to a clergy vocation is a M.Div. degree. Accredited theological schools are recognizing that people are entering this field as a second or even third career, and they are increasingly creative with their courses and scheduling in order to make seminary education more accessible. The availability of distance-learning programs is growing; with that in mind, TOCCUSA is moving in the direction of making an M.Div. degree a requirement for ordination. In addition to the M.Div. and the aforementioned training, clergy candidates will be required to earn a certificate in Old Catholic studies.

Anticipated Issues

As non-stipendiary and bi-vocational clergy, the biggest obstacles are money and time. How will this training be funded? Can clergy make time in their already over-scheduled lives to attend a three- to four-day workshop? What additional responsibilities will the trainees have to take on to become the new teachers of this model? With no staff assistance, the entire workload will fall to the clergy who are the initial trainees. How can they be supported in this endeavor? These questions will have to be addressed at National Assembly.

Another difficulty is the still small size of TOCCUSA and the fact that it is spread across the country. Clergy already struggle with a sense of isolation from their colleagues, and geographical distances make collegial gatherings rare. There is not yet a crucible where clergy formation is supported and growth is encouraged. Theory can be taught; formation takes time and a supportive community. How do we bring people together for this process?

A third obstacle is that not all people who are called to a religious vocation necessarily have leadership skills. In a *Forbes* magazine website blog on leadership, it was said that one of the things successful leaders do every day is invest in relationships.¹ These skills are not necessarily taught as part of theological education, so they must be taught as part of the implementation of this model. Although it is not the focus of this thesis, the hoped-for outcome will be clergy who have learned leadership skills along with this new Trinitarian-relational perspective. The Triune God is first and foremost our leader, and yet we need clergy who can lead so people *want* to join us in building God's kingdom.

And finally, a fourth hurdle: many Catholics' experience of church is one where the church takes care of them—they are only required to “pay, pray, and obey.” My sense is that Catholics either do not feel qualified to take on some of the tasks of running the church or they do not see it as their responsibility. How do we engage people so they

¹ Glenn Llopis, “The Most Successful Leaders Do 15 Things Automatically, Every Day,” *Forbes*, February 18, 2013, accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/glennllopis/2013/02/18/the-most-successful-leaders-do-15-things-automatically-every-day/>.

recognize their God-given gifts and talents and come to understand their call to join with clergy in the *Missio Dei*?

Implications for the Future

While the issues presented here pose some difficulty, I believe the positive benefits of implementing this model will supersede the challenges, especially as TOCCUSA continues to grow, educate its clergy and laity, and create ecumenical bonds with like-minded spiritual communities. One of the favorable outcomes I hope for is improved connections—with God, with oneself, and with others through the increased focus on and modeling of Trinitarian-based relationships.

Another hoped-for outcome is a decrease in clericalism. I see this as important for the clergy and laity alike. Clergy would need to teach and lead in such a way as to encourage the laity to step up and reclaim their place in the church family. This would leave the clergy with more time to focus on the spiritual aspects of their work, to develop more relational skills for use within the congregation, and for ecumenical outreach and connection.

A third possible outcome is a priest or deacon experiencing her vocation as something that contributes to her happiness and well-being; as a result, she would be more attractive to all who encounter her. I believe clergy who follow this model will find increased joy and satisfaction. God willing, it could inspire others to a deeper involvement with church and contemplation of a vocation for themselves.

My final hope is that this thesis will serve as a resource for current and aspiring TOCCUSA clergy and for coming generations of Old Catholics in the United States.

Appendix 1

Declaration of the Catholic Congress at Munich

September 22-24, 1871

1. Conscious of our religious duties, we hold fast to the Old Catholic creed and worship, as attested in scripture, and in tradition. We regard ourselves, therefore, as actual members of the Catholic Church, and will not be deprived of communion with the Church, nor of the rights, which through this communion, accrue to us in Church and State.

We declare the ecclesiastical penalties decreed against us, on account of our fidelity to our creed, to be unjustifiable and tyrannical; and we will not allow ourselves to be daunted or hindered by these censures in availing ourselves of our communion with the Church according to our conscience.

From the point of view of the confession of faith contained in the so-called Tridentine Creed, we repudiate the dogmas introduced under the pontificate of Pius IX in contradiction to the doctrine of the Church, and to the principles continuously followed since the Council of Jerusalem, especially the dogmas of the Pope's infallible teaching, and of his supreme episcopal and immediate jurisdiction.

2. We rely on the old constitution of the Church. We protest against every attempt to oust the bishops from the immediate and independent control of the separate Churches. We repudiate, as in conflict with the Tridentine Canon, according to which there exists a God-appointed hierarchy of bishops, priests, and deacons, the doctrine embodied in the Vatican doctrine, that the Pope is the sole God-appointed depositary of all ecclesiastical authority and power. We recognize the primacy of the Bishop of Rome as it was acknowledged, on authority of Scripture, by Fathers and Councils in the old undivided Christian Church.

(a.) We declare that articles of belief cannot be defined merely by the utterance of the Pope for the time being, and the express or tacit assent of the bishops, bound as they are by oath to unqualified obedience to the Pope; but only in accordance with Holy Scripture and the old tradition of the Church, as it is set forth in the recognized Fathers and Councils. Moreover a council which was not, as the Vatican Council was, deficient in the actual external conditions of oecumenicity, but which, in the general sentiment of its members, exhibited a disregard of the fundamental principles and of the past history of the Church, could not issue decrees binding upon the consciences of the members of the Church.

(b.) We lay stress upon this principle that the conformity of the doctrinal decisions of a council, with the primitive and traditional creed of the Church, must be determined by the

consciousness of belief of the Catholic people and by theological science. We maintain for the Catholic laity and the clergy, as well as for theological sciences, the right of testifying and of objecting on the occasion of establishing articles of belief.

3. We aim at a reform in the Church in cooperation with the sciences of theology and canon law, which shall, in the spirit of the ancient Church, remove the present defects and abuses, and in particular shall fulfill the legitimate decrees of the Catholic people for a constitutionally regulated participation in Church business, whereby, without risk to doctrinal unity or doctrine, national considerations and needs may be taken account of.

We declare that the charge of Jansenism against the Church of Utrecht is unfounded, and that consequently no opposition in dogma exists between it and us. We hope for a reunion with the Greco-oriental and Russian Church, the separation of which had no sufficient origin, and depends upon no insuperable difference in dogma. Whilst pursuing the desired reforms in the path of science and a progressive Christian culture, we hope gradually to bring about a good understanding with the Protestant and Episcopal churches.

4. We hold scientific study indispensable for the training of the clergy. We consider that the artificial seclusion of the clergy from the intellectual culture of the present century (as in the seminaries and higher schools under the sole conduct of the bishops) is dangerous, from the great influence which the clergy possess over the culture of the people, and that it is altogether unsuited to give the clergy such an education and training as shall combine piety and morality, intellectual culture and patriotic feeling. We claim for the lower order of clergy a suitable position of consideration, protected against all hierarchical tyranny. We protest against the arbitrary removal of secular priests, *amovibilitas ad nutum*, a practice introduced through the French Code, and latterly imposed everywhere.

5. We support the constitutions of our countries, which secure us civil freedom and culture. Therefore we repudiate on national and historical grounds the dangerous dogma of Papal supremacy; and promise to stand faithfully and resolutely by our respective Governments in the struggle against that ultramontanism which assumes the form of dogma in the Syllabus.

6. Since manifestly the present miserable confusion in the Church has been occasioned by the society called that of Jesus; since this order abuses its influence to spread and cherish among the hierarchy, clergy, and people, tendencies hostile to culture, dangerous to the State and to the nation; since it teaches and encourages a false and corrupting morality: we declare it as our conviction that peace and prosperity, unity in the Church, and just relations between her and civil society, will only be possible when the pernicious activity of this order is put an end to.

7. As members of the Catholic Church, to which – not yet altered by the Vatican decrees – Government had guaranteed political recognition and public protection, we maintain our claims to all the real property and legal rights of the Church.

Appendix 2

Fourteen Theses of the Old Catholic Union Conference at Bonn

September 14-16, 1874

- I. We agree that the apocryphal or deutero-canonical books of the Old Testament are not of the same canonicity as the books contained in the Hebrew Canon.
- II. We agree that no translation of Holy Scripture can claim an authority superior to that of the original text.
- III. We agree that the reading of Holy Scripture in the vulgar tongue can not be lawfully forbidden.
- IV. We agree that, in general, it is more fitting, and in accordance with the spirit of the Church, that the Liturgy should be in the tongue understood by the people.
- V. We agree that Faith working by Love, not Faith without Love, is the means and condition of Man's justification before God.
- VI. Salvation cannot be merited by "merit of condignity," because there is no proportion between the infinite worth of salvation promised by God and the finite worth of man's works.
- VII. We agree that the doctrine of "opera supererogationis" and of a "thesaurus meritorum sanctorum," i.e., that the overflowing merits of the Saints can be transferred to others, either by the rulers of the Church, or by the authors of the good works themselves, is untenable.
- VIII. 1. We acknowledge that the number of the sacraments was fixed at seven, first in the twelfth century, and then was received into the general teaching of the Church, not as tradition coming down from the Apostles or from the earliest times, but as the result of theological speculation.
2. Catholic theologians acknowledge, and we acknowledge with them, that Baptism and the Eucharist are "*principalia, praecipus, eximia salutis nostrae sacramenta.*"
- IX. 1. The Holy Scriptures being recognized as the primary rule of Faith, we agree that the genuine tradition, i.e. the unbroken transmission partly oral, partly in writing of the doctrine delivered by Christ and the Apostles is an authoritative source of teaching for all successive generations of Christians. This tradition is partly to be

found in the consensus of the great ecclesiastical bodies standing in historical continuity with the primitive Church, partly to be gathered by scientific method from the written documents of all centuries.

2. We acknowledge that the Church of England, and the Churches derived from her, have maintained unbroken the Episcopal succession.

X. We reject the new Roman doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as being contrary to the tradition of the first thirteen centuries according to which Christ alone is conceived without sin.

XI. We agree that the practice of confession of sins before the congregation or a Priest, together with the exercise of the power of the keys, has come down to us from the primitive Church, and that, purged from the abuses and free from constraint, it should be preserved in the Church.

XII. We agree that “indulgences” can only refer to penalties actually imposed by the Church herself.

XIII. We acknowledge that the practice of the commemoration of the faithful departed, i.e. the calling down of a richer outpouring of Christ’s grace upon them, has come down to us from the primitive Church, and is to be preserved in the Church.

XIV. 1. The Eucharistic celebration in the Church is not a continuous repetition or renewal of the propitiatory sacrifice offered once forever by Christ upon the cross; but its sacrificial character consists in this, that it is the permanent memorial of it, and a representation and presentation on earth of that one oblation of Christ for the salvation of redeemed mankind, which according to the Epistle to the Hebrews (9:11,12), is continuously presented in heaven by Christ, who now appears in the presence of God for us (9:24).

2. While this is the character of the Eucharist in reference to the sacrifice of Christ, it is also a sacred feast, wherein the faithful, receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, have communion one with another (I Cor. 10:17).

Appendix 3

Declaration of Utrecht

September 24, 1884

1. We adhere faithfully to the Rule of Faith laid down by St. Vincent of Lerins in these terms: *"Id teneamus, quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est; hoc est etenim vere proprieque catholicum."*² For this reason, we preserve in professing the faith of the primitive Church, as formulated in the ecumenical symbols and specified precisely by the unanimously accepted decisions of the Oecumenical Councils held in the undivided Church of the first thousand years.
2. We therefore reject the decrees of the so-called Council of the Vatican, which promulgated July 18, 1870, concerning the infallibility and the universal Episcopate of the Bishop of Rome, decrees which are in contradiction with the faith of the ancient Church and which destroys its ancient canonical constitution by attributing to the Pope the plenitude of ecclesiastical powers over all Dioceses and over all the faithful. By denial of this primatial jurisdiction, we do not wish to deny the historical primacy which several Oecumenical Councils and Fathers of the ancient Church have attributed to the Bishop of Rome by recognizing him as the *Primus inter pares*.
3. We also reject the dogma of the Immaculate Conception promulgated by Pius IX in 1854 in defiance of the Holy Scriptures and in contradiction of the centuries.
4. As for the other Encyclicals published by the Bishops of Rome in recent times, for example, the Bulls *Unigenitus* and *Auctorem fidei*, and the *Syllabus of 1864*, we reject them on all such points as binding on the consciences of the faithful. We also renew the ancient protests of the Catholic Church in Holland against the errors of the Roman Curia, and against its attacks upon the rights of the national Churches.
5. We refuse to accept the decrees of the Council of Trent in manners of discipline and as for the dogmatic decisions of that Council; we accept them only as far as they are in harmony with the teaching of the primitive Church.
6. Considering that the Holy Eucharist has always been the true central point of Catholic worship, we consider it our right to declare that we maintain with perfect fidelity the ancient Catholic doctrine concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, by believing that we receive the body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ under the species of bread and wine. This Eucharistic celebration in the Church is neither a continual repetition nor a renewal of the expiatory sacrifice which Jesus offered once for all upon the Cross:

² "We hold that which has been believed everywhere, always, by all to be the catholic faith."

but it is a sacrifice because it is the perpetual commemoration of the sacrifice offered upon the Cross, and it is the act by which we represent upon the earth and appropriate to ourselves the one offering which Jesus Christ makes in Heaven, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews 9:11-12, for the salvation of redeemed humanity, by appearing for us in the present of God (Heb. 9:24). The character of the Holy Eucharist being thus understood, it is, at the same time, a sacrificial feast, by means of which the faithful in receiving the body and Blood of our Savior, enter in communion with one another (1 Cor 10:17).

7. We hope that Catholic theologians, in maintaining the faith of the undivided church, will succeed in establishing an agreement upon questions which have been controverted ever since the divisions which arose between the Churches. We exhort the priests of our jurisdictions to teach, both by preaching and by instruction of the young, especially the essential Christian truths professed by all the Christian confessions, to avoid, in discussing controverted doctrines, any violation of truth or charity and in word and deed to set an example to the members.
8. By maintaining and professing the doctrine of Jesus Christ, by refusing to admit those errors which by the fault of men have crept into the Catholic Church, by laying aside the abuses in ecclesiastical matters, together with the worldly tendencies of the hierarchy, we believe that we shall be able to combat efficaciously the great evils of our day, which are unbelief and indifference in matters of religion.

Appendix 4

Suggested Readings on Leadership and Ministry

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